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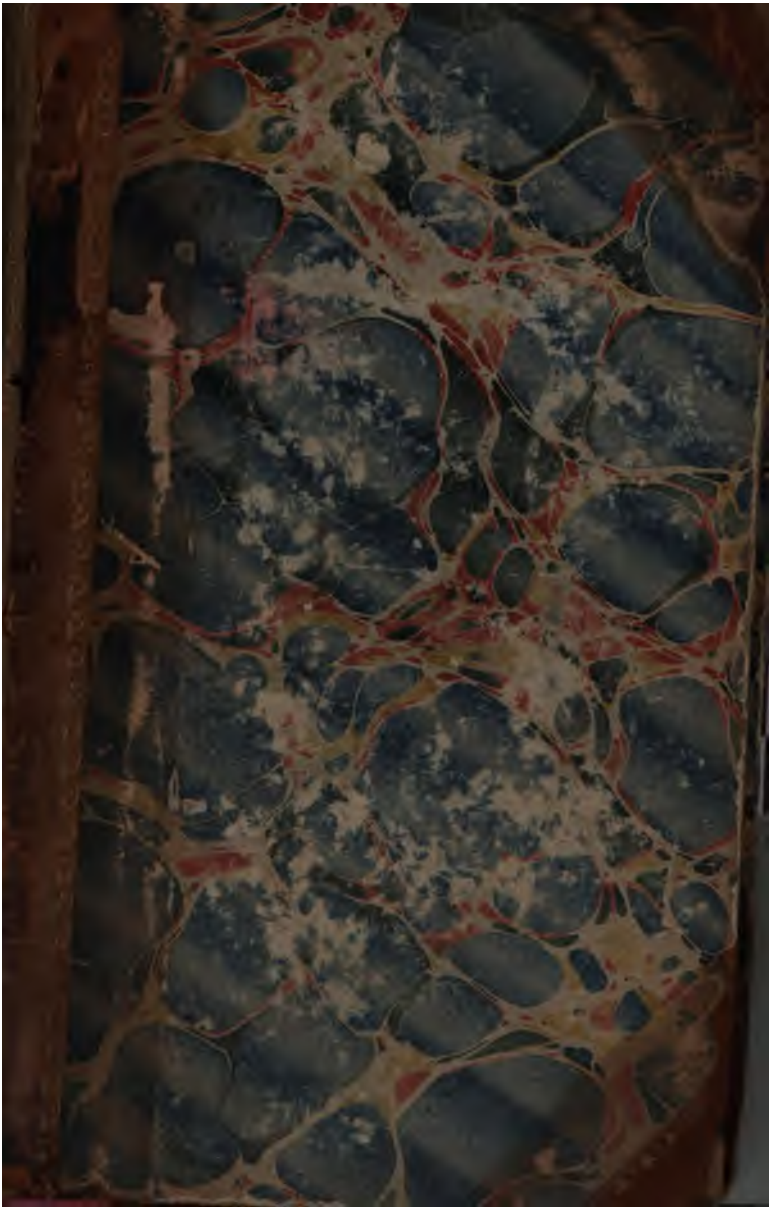

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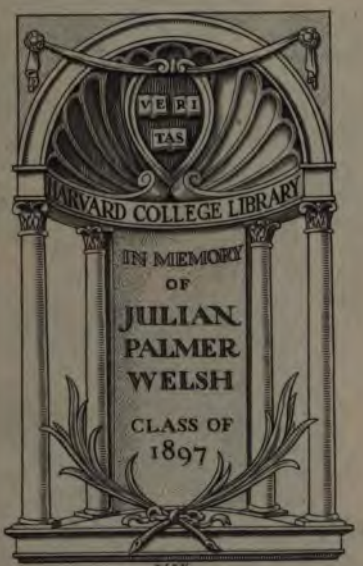
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BRITISH THEATRE.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY J. MOYES, GREVILLE STREET.

THE

BRITISH THEATRE;

OR,

A COLLECTION OF PLAYS,

WHICH ARE ACTED AT

The Theatres Royal,

DRURY LANE, COVENT GARDEN, HAYMARKET, AND LYCEU

PRINTED, UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS, FROM THE PROMPT BOOKS.

WITH

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BY MRS. INCHBALD.

A NEW EDITION.

IN TWENTY VOLUMES.

VOL. X.

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Wild Oats
Beggars Opera
Man of the World
The Inconstant
Bold Stroke for
a Husband

WILD OATS

LADY AMARANTH — ALL THINGS OLD AND DECRIPIT
BEWITCHED.

ACT V. SCENE II.

Painted by Singleton. Published by Longman & C. Hurst, 1818.

WILD OATS;

OR,

THE STROLLING GENTLEMEN;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY JOHN O'KEEFFE, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES ROYAL, DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

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90, CHEAPSIDE.

BUNGAY:
Printed by J. and R. Childs

REMARKS.

WITH a double respect for talents, and for misfortune, these remarks are begun.

The present comedy is written by O'Keeffe, who saw not the traces of his pen as he marked the paper; whose days pass away, uncheered by the sun or any visible object; but whose mind supports with resignation his bitter calamity, and is enlightened by imagination, whilst his eyes are shut in utter darkness.

Were each close imitator of an author's style punishable by law, like the perpetrator of other wrongs, Mr. O'Keeffe might have been an independent, though not a happy man; for that source of a new kind of mirth, termed by some, exquisite nonsense, of which he was the first discoverer, made the town so merry, that, like good wine, he might have sold it at any price; but this rich juice of hilarity, polluted by the false spirit of imitation, at length gave a stupor to those, whom the beverage had before revived; and the pure and the adulterated became distasteful together.

This comedy is the only attempt of the author to produce a drama above opera and farce. His productions, in the latter species of writing, are perfect compositions: nothing of the kind can be superior to his "Agreeable Surprise," and his "Son-in-Law."

He has a number of other farces of little less attraction; such as "Peeping Tom." Another class after that, and each possessing infinite fancy, whim, and novelty. Still success did not follow all his productions; a few years past he wrote very frequently, and sometimes too hastily.

On the first night of representing any of those whimsical dramas, amidst loud peals of laughter at the comic dialogues or incidents, there was generally a most affecting spectacle behind the curtain. O' Keeffe, stone-blind, (not an affliction of birth, but of late years) led by his little son, as a guide, down to the stage-door—to the lock of which he would anxiously place his ear, to catch the quickest information how his work was received—and when, unhappily, hisses from the audience would sound louder than applause—in strong agitation he would press his hands to each side of his head, as if he had yet one sense too much. Thus he would remain, without sight or hearing, till some unexpected sally of humour in his drama once more put the house in good temper, and they would begin to laugh and applaud;—on which, his son, rapid as lightning, would pull him by the elbow, and cry out, "Now, father, listen again."

"Wild Oats" would not disgrace an author of much higher pretensions in dramatic writing than Mr. O'Keeffe. There is great pleasantry throughout the play, many natural touches of simplicity, and some well-written dialogues and sentiments. The *plot is* interesting, the characters new, or at least in

new situations, and the whole forms an evening's entertainment for an auditor of taste—such a one having at the same time in his memory, certain popular sentences from certain well-known comedies and tragedies; for without intimate acquaintance with all the quotations made use of by the hero of the piece, it must totally lose its effect, and this hero appear like a madman.

Perhaps, no comedy, on a first night, was ever more fortunate in a list of excellent comic actors to represent the characters.

Lewis, in Rover, fervid as usual, seemed so enamoured of his stage exploits, that every spectator forgave him his folly, for the bewitching ardour with which he pursued it.

In Ephraim, the quaker, the spirit moved Munden —as it always does—to act just as he should do.

Quick was on the London stage when this play was first performed, and though Sir George Thunder was by no means a part best suited to his abilities, yet Quick gave comic importance to all he undertook.

Mr. Thomas Blanchard, since dead, played the little part of Sim with wondrous skill.

Mrs. Pope (once Miss Young) was excellent in Lady Amaranth.

And the silly Jane can never have so good a representative as Mrs. Wells.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.
SIR GEORGE THUNDER	*Mr. Dowton.*
ROVER	*Elliston.*
HARRY THUNDER	*Penley.*
BANKS	*Powell.*
JOHN DORY	*Terry.*
FARMER GAMMON	*G. Smith.*
LAMP	*Yarnold.*
EPHRAIM SMOOTH	*Munden.*
SIM	*Knight.*
ZACHARIAH	*Miss Carr.*
TRAP	*Mr. H. Williams.*
TWITCH	*Webster.*
LADY AMARANTH	*Mrs. W. West*
AMELIA	*Knight.*
JANE	*Orger.*

SCENE. Part of Hampshire.

WILD OATS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Parlour in LADY AMARANTH'S *House.*

Enter JOHN DORY.

John. FINE cruizing this! without flip or biscuit! don't know who's the Governor of this here fort; but if he can victual us a few—how hollow my bread-room sounds! [*Striking his sides.*] I'm as empty as a stoved keg, and as tired as an old Dutchman—my obstinate master, Sir George, to tow my old hulk—aboard the house, ha, hoy!

Sir Geo. [*Without.*] John! John Dory!

John. [*Sits.*] I'm at anchor.

Enter SIR GEORGE THUNDER.

Sir. Geo. I don't know who's house we've got into here, John, but I think, when he knows me, we may hope for some refreshment—Eh! [*Looking at* JOHN.] was not I your captain?

John. Yes; and I was your boatswain. And what of all that?

Sir Geo. Then how dare you sit in my presence, you bluff-head?

John. Why, for the matter of that, I don't mind; but had I been *your captain*, and you my boatswain,

the man that stood by me at sea should be welcome to sit before me at land.

Sir Geo. That's true, my dear John; offer to stand up, and damme if I don't knock you down—zounds! I am as dry as a powder match—to sail at the rate of ten knots an hour, over fallow and stubble, from my own house, but half a league on this side of Gosport and not catch these deserters!

John. In this here chase you wanted the ballast of wisdom.

Sir Geo. How, sirrah! hasn't my old dear friend, Dick Broadside, got the command of the ship I so often fought myself—to man it for him with expedition, didn't I (out of my own pocket) offer two guineas over the king's bounty to every seaman that would enter on board her? Hav'n't these three scoundrels fingered the shot, then ran, and didn't I do right to run after them? Damn the money; I no more mind that than a piece of clinker; but 'twas the pride of my heart to see my beloved ship (the Eagle) well mann'd, when my old friend is the commander.

John. But since you've laid yourself up in ordinary, retired to live in quiet, on your estate, and had done with all sea affairs—

Sir Geo. John, John, a man should forget his own convenience for his country's good.—Though Broadside's letter said these fellows were lurking about this part of Hampshire, yet still it's all hide and seek.

John. Your ill luck.

Sir Geo. Mine, you swab?

John. Ay, you've money and gold; but grace and good fortune have shook hands with you these nineteen years, for that rogue's trick you [illegible] Amelia, by deceiving her with a [illegible] you passed yourself for Capta[illegible] putting off to sea, l[illegible] and since marryi[illegible]

Sir Geo. Wasn't I forced to it by my father?

John. Ay; because she had a great fortin, her death too was a judgment upon you.

Sir Geo. Why, you impudent dog-fish!—upbraid me for running into false bay, when you were my pilot? Wasn't it you even brought me the false clergyman, that performed the sham marriage with Amelia?

John. Yes, you thought so; but I took care to bring you a real clergyman.

Sir Geo. But is this a time or place for your lectures? At home, abroad, sea, or land, you will still badger me! mention my Wild Oats again and—you scoundrel, since the night my bed-curtains took fire, when you were my boatswain aboard the Eagle, you've got me quite into leading strings—you snatched me upon deck, and tossed me into the sea,—to save me from being burnt, I was almost drowned.

John. You would but for me—

Sir Geo. Yes, you dragged me out by the ear, like a water-dog—last week, 'cause you found the tenth bottle uncorked, you rushed in among my friends, and ran away with me; and next morning Captain O'Shanaghan sends me a challenge for quitting the company, when he was in the chair! so, to save me from a headache, you'd like to've got my brains blown out.

John. Oh, very well; be burnt in your bed, and tumble in the water, by jumping into boats, like a tight fellow as you are, and poison youself with sloe-juice; see if John cares a piece of mouldy biscuit about it. But I wish you hadn't made me your valet de shamber. No sooner was I got on shore, after five years dashing among rocks, shoals, and breakers, than you set me on a high-trotting cart horse, which knockt me up and down like an old bum-boat in the Bay of Biscay, and here's nothing to drink after all! Because at home you keep open house, you think every body else does the same.

Sir Geo. Why, by sailing into this strange port, we may be more free than welcome.

John. Holloa! I'll never cease piping, till it calls up a drop to wet my whistle. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. Yes, (as John Dory remarks) I fear my trip through life will be attended with heavy squalls and foul weather. When my conduct to poor Amelia comes athwart my mind, it's a hurricane for that day, and turn in at night, the ballad of "Margaret and William" rings in my ear. [*Sings.*] "In glided Margaret's grimly ghost." Oh, zounds! the dismals are coming upon me, and can't get a cheering glass to—holloa!

Enter EPHRAIM SMOOTH.

Eph. Friend, what wouldst thou have?

Sir Geo. Grog.

Eph. Neither man nor woman of that name abideth here.

Sir Geo. Ha! ha! ha! man and woman! then if you'll bring me Mr. Brandy and Mrs. Water, we'll couple them, and the first child probably will be Master Grog.

Eph. Thou dost speak in parables, which I understand not.

Sir Geo. Sheer off with your sanctified poop, and send the gentleman of the house.

Eph. The owner of this mansion is a maiden, and she approacheth.

Enter LADY AMARANTH.

Lady Am. Do I behold?—It is! how dost thou, uncle?

Sir Geo. Is it possible you can be my niece, Lady Maria Amaranth Thunder?

Lady Am. I am the daughter of thy deceased brother Loftus, called Earl Thunder, but no lady; my name is Mary.

Sir Geo. But, zounds! how is all this? Eh? unexpectedly find you in a strange house, of which old Sly here tells me you're the mistress, turned quaker, and disclaim your title!

Lady Am. Thou know'st the relation to whose care my father left me?

Sir Geo. Well! I know our cousin, old Dovehouse, was a quaker! but I didn't suspect he would have made you one.

Lady Am. Being now gathered to his fathers, he did bequeath unto me his worldly goods; amongst them this mansion, and the lands around it.

Eph. So thou becom'st and continue one of the faithful. I am executor of his will, and by it, I cannot give thee, Mary, possession of those goods, but on those conditions.

Sir Geo. Tell me of your thee's and thou's, quakers' wills and mansions! I say, girl, though on the death of your father, my eldest brother, Loftus, Earl Thunder, from your being a female, his title devolved to his next brother, Robert; though, as a woman, you can't be an earl, nor as a woman, you can't make laws for your sex and our sex, yet, as the daughter of a peer, you are, and, by Heaven, shall be called Lady Maria Amaranth Thunder.

Eph. Thou makest too much noise, friend.

Sir Geo. Call me friend, and I'll bump your block against the capstern.

Eph. Yea, this is a man of danger, and I will leave Mary to abide it. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. 'Sfire, my lady—

Lady Am. Title is vanity.

Enter ZACHARIAH.

Zach. Shall thy cook, this day, roast certain birds of the air, call'd woodcocks, and ribs of the oxen likewise?

Lady Am. All. My uncle sojourneth with me peradventure, and my meal shall be a feast, friend Zachariah.

Zach. My tongue shall say so, friend Mary.

Sir Geo. [*Strikes him.*] Sir George Thunder bids thee remember to call your mistress Lady Amaranth.

Zach. Verily, George.

Sir Geo. George! sirrah, though a younger brother, the honour of knighthood was my reward for placing the glorious British flag over that of a daring enemy—therefore address me with respect.

Zach. Yea, I do, good George. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. George and Mary! here's levelling, here's abolition of title with a vengeance!

Lady Am. Kinsman, be patient; thou, and thy son, my cousin Henry, whom I have not beheld, I think, these twelve years, shall be welcome to my dwelling. Where now abideth the youth?

Sir Geo. At the Naval Academy, at Portsmouth.

Lady Am. May I not see the young man?

Sir Geo. What, to make a quaker of him?—No, no. But, hold, as she's now a wealthy heiress, her marrying my son Harry will keep up and preserve her title in our own family too. [*Aside.*] Wouldst thou really be glad to see him? thou shalt, Mary. Ha! ha! ha! John Dory! [*Calling.*] Here comes my valet de chambre.

Enter JOHN DORY.

John. Why, sir—such a breeze sprung up!

Sir Geo. Avast old man of war; you must instantly convoy my son from Portsmouth.

John. Then I must first convoy him to Portsmouth, for he happens to be out of the dock already.

Sir Geo. What wind now?

John. You know, on our quitting harbour—

Sir Geo. Damn your sea-jaw, you marvellous dolphin, give the contents of your log-book in plain English.

John. The young squire has cut and run.

Sir Geo. What?

John. Got leave to come to you; and master didn't find out before yesterday, that, instead of making for home, he had sheer'd off towards London; directly sent notice to you, and Sam has traced us all the way here to bring you the news.

Sir Geo. What, a boy of mine to quit his guns? I'll grapple him.—Come, John.

Lady Am. Order the carriage for mine uncle.

Sir Geo. No, thank ye, my lady. Let your equipage keep up your own dignity. I have horses here; but I won't knock 'em up; next village is the channel for the stage—My lady, I'll bring the dog to you by the bowsprit.—Weigh anchor! crowd sail! and after him! [*Exit.*

Enter EPHRAIM. [*Peeping in.*]

Eph. The man of noise doth not tarry, then my spirit is glad.

Lady Am. Let Sarah prepare chambers for my kinsman, and hire the maiden for me that thou didst mention.

Eph. I will, for this damsel is passing fair, and hath found grace in mine eyes. Mary, as thou art yet a stranger in this land, and just taken possession of this estate, the laws of society command thee to be on terms of amity with thy wealthy neighbours.

Lady Am. Yea; but while I entertain the rich, the hearts of the poor shall also rejoice; I myself will now go forth into the adjacent hamlet, and invite all that cometh to hearty cheer.

Eph. Yea, I will distribute among the poor good books.

Lady Am. And meat and drink too, friend Ephraim. In the fulness of plenty, they shall join in thanksgiving for those gifts of which I am so unworthy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Road.

Enter HARRY THUNDER, *and* MIDGE *follows, calling.*

Midge. I say, Dick Buskin! hark ye, my lad!

Harry. What keeps Rover?

Midge. I'm sure, I don't know. As you desired, I paid for our breakfast. But the devil's in that fellow; every inn we stop at, he will always hang behind, chattering to the bar-maid, or chamber-maid.

Harry. Or any, or no maid. But he's a worthy lad; and I love him better, I think, than my own brother, had I one.

Midge. Oh! but, Dick, mind, my boy——

Harry. Stop, Midge. Though 'twas my orders, when I set out on this scamper with the players, (the better to conceal my quality,) for you, before people, to treat me as your companion, yet, at the same time, you should have had discretion enough to remember, when we're alone, that I am still your master, and son to Sir George Thunder.

Midge. Sir, I ask your pardon; but by making yourself my equal, I've got so used to familiarity, that I find it curst hard to shake it off.

Harry. Well, sir, pray mind, that familiarity is all over now. My frolic's out; I now throw off the player, and shall directly return. My father must by this time have heard of my departure from the academy at Portsmouth; and, though I was deluded away by my rage for a little acting, yet 'tis wrong

of me to give the gay old fellow any cause of uneasiness.

Midge. And, sir, shall you and I never act another scene together? Shall I never again play Colonel Standard for my own benefit? Never again have the honour of caning your honour in the character of Tom Errand?

Harry. In future, act the part of a smart hat and coat brusher, or I shall have the honour of kicking you in the character of an idle puppy. You were a good servant; but I find, by letting you crack your jokes, and sit in my company, you're grown quite a rascal.

Midge. Yes, sir, I was a modest, well behaved lad; but evil communication corrupts good manners.

Harry. Begone, sirrah, till I call for you.

[*Exit* MIDGE, *grumbling.*

Harry. Well, if my father but forgives me.—This three months' excursion has shown me some life, and a devilish deal of fun. For one circumstance, I shall ever remember it with delight. Its bringing me acquainted with Jack Rover. How long he stays! Jack! In this forlorn stroller, I have discovered qualities that honour human nature, and accomplishments that might grace a prince. I don't know a pleasanter fellow, except when he gets to his abominable habit of quotation. I hope he will not find the purse I've hid in his coat pocket, before we part. I dread the moment, but it's come.

Rover. [*Without.*] "The brisk li-li-lightning I."

Harry. Ay, here's the rattle. Hurried on by the impetuous flow of his own volatile spirits, his life is a rapid stream of extravagant whim; and while the serious voice of humanity prompts his heart to the best of actions, his features shine in laugh and levity.—Studying *Bayes, eh, Jack?*

Enter ROVER.

Rover. "I am the bold Thunder."

Harry. [*Aside.*] I am, if he knew but all.—Keep one standing in the road!

Rover. Beg your pardon, my dear Dick; but all the fault of—Plague on't, that a man can't sleep and breakfast at an inn, then return up to his bedchamber for his gloves that he'd forgot, but there he must find chambermaids, thumping feathers and knocking pillows about, to keep one when one has affairs and business. 'Pon my soul, these girls' conduct to us is intolerable. The very thought brings the blood into my face, and whenever they attempt to serve, provoke me so, damme but I will, I will—An't I right, Dick?

Harry. No; "all in the wrong."

Rover. No matter, Dick; that's the universal play "all round the Wrekin;" but you are so conceited, because, by this company you're going to join at Winchester, you are engaged for high tragedy!

Harry. And you for Rangers, Plumes, and Foppingtons.

Rover. Our first play is Lear. I was devilish imperfect in Edgar, t'other night at Lymington. I must look it over. [*Takes out a book.*] "Away, the foul fiend follows me!" Hollo! stop a moment, we shall have the whole county after us. [*Going.*

Harry. What now?

Rover. That rosy-faced chambermaid put me in such a passion, that, by Heaven, I walked out of the house, and forgot to pay our bill. [*Going.*

Harry. Never mind, Rover, it's paid.

Rover. Paid! why, neither you nor Midge had money enough. No, really!

Harry. Ha! ha! ha! I tell you 'tis.

Rover. You paid? Oh, very well. Every honest

fellow should be a stock purse. Come, then, let's push on now. Ten miles to Winchester; we shall be there by eleven.

Harry. Our trunks are booked at the inn for the Winchester coach.

Rover. "Ay, to foreign climates my old trunk I bear." But I prefer walking to the car of Thespis.

Harry. Which is the way?

Rover. Here.

Harry. Then I go there. [*Pointing opposite.*

Rover. Eh!

Harry. My dear boy, on this spot, and at this moment, we must part.

Rover. Part!

Harry. Rover, you wish me well.

Rover. Well, and suppose so. Part, eh! What mystery and grand? What are you at? Do you forget,—you, Midge, and I, are engaged to Truncheon, the manager, and that the bills are already up with our names to-night to play at Winchester?

Harry. Jack, you and I have often met on a stage in assumed characters; if it's your wish we should ever meet again in our real ones, of sincere friends, without asking whither I go, or my motives for leaving you, when I walk up this road, do you turn down that.

Rover. Joke!

Harry. I'm serious. Good bye!

Rover. If you repent your engagement with Truncheon, I'll break off too, and go with you wherever—

[*Takes him under the arm.*

Harry. Attempt to follow me, and even our acquaintance ends.

Rover. Eh!

Harry. Don't think of my reasons, only that it must be.

Rover. Have I done any thing to Dick Buskin? leave me! [*Turns and puts his handkerchief to his eyes.*

Harry. I am as much concerned as you to—Good bye!

Rover. I can't even bid him—I won't neither.—If any cause could have given—Farewell.

Harry. Bless my poor fellow! Adieu. [*Silently weeps.* [*Exeunt several ways.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Village, a Farm House, and near it a Cottage.

Enter FARMER GAMMON *and* EPHRAIM.

F. Gam. Well, Master Ephraim, I may depend on thee, as you quakers never break your words.

Eph. I have spoken to Mary, and she, at my request, consenteth to take thy daughter, Jane, as her handmaid.

F. Gam. Very good of you.

Eph. Goodness I do like, and also—comely Jane. [*Aside.*] The maiden I will prefer, for the sake of—myself. [*Aside.*]

F. Gam. I intended to make a present to the person that does me such a piece of service; but I sha'n't affront you with it.

Eph. I am meek and humble, and must take affronts.

F. Gam. Then here's a guinea, Master Ephraim.

Eph. I expected not this; but there is no harm in a guinea. [*Exit.*

F. Gam. So I shall get my children off my hands. My son, Sim, is robbing me day and night,—giving

away my corn and what not among the poor.—My daughter Jane—when girls have nought to do, this love-mischief creeps into their minds, and then hey! they're for kicking up their heels—Sim! [*Calling.*

Enter SIM.

Sim. Yes, feyther.

F. Gam. Call your sister.

Sim. Jane, feyther wants you.

Enter JANE, *from the house, with linen she had been working.*

Jane. Did you call me?

F. Gam. I often told you both, (but it's now settled) you must go out into the world, and work for your bread.

Sim. Well, feyther, whatever you think right must be so, and I'm content.

Jane. And I'm sure, feyther, I'm willing to do as you'd have me.

F. Gam. There's ingratitude for you! When my wife died, I brought you both up from the shell, and now you want to fly off and forsake me.

Sim. Why no; I'm willing to live with you all my days.

Jane. And I'm sure, feyther, if it's your desire. I'll never part from you.

F. Gam. What, you want to hang upon me, like a couple of leeches, ay, to strip my branches, and leave me a wither'd hawthorn? See who's yon. [*Exit* SIM.] Jane, Ephraim Smooth has hired you for Lady Amaranth.

Jane. O lack! then I shall live in the great house.

F. Gam. She has sent us all presents of good books, [*Gives her one.*] to read a chapter in. That, when one's in a passion, gives a mon patience.

Jane. Thank her good ladyship.

F. Gam. My being encumbered with you bot the cause why old Banks won't give me his siste

Jane. That's a pity. If we must have a s mother, Madam Amelia would make us a very g one. But I wonder how she can refuse you, feyt for I'm sure she must think you a very portly ma your scarlet vest and new scratch. You can't t how parsonable you'd look, if you'd only shave t a week, and put sixpence in the poor-box. [*Re reading.*]

F. Geo. However, if Banks still refuses, I l him in my power. I'll turn them both out of t cottage yonder, and the bailiff shall provide t with a lodging.

Enter BANKS.

Well, neighbour Banks, once for all, am I to m your sister?

Banks. That she best knows.

F. Gam. Ay, but she says she won't.

Banks. Then I dare say she won't, for thou woman, I never knew her to speak what she d think.

F. Gam. Then she won't have me? A fine t this, that you and she, who are little better than pers, dare be so damn'd saucy!

Banks. Why, farmer, I confess we're poor; while that's the worst our enemies can say of we're content.

F. Gam. Od, dom it! I wish I had now a g fair occasion to quarrel with him; I'd make him tent with a devil to him; I'd knock'en down, him to jail, and—But I'll be up with him!

Enter SIM.

Sim. Oh, feyther, here's one Mr. Lamp, a leader of showfolks, come from Andover to act in

village. He wants a barn to play in, if you'll hire him yours.

F. Gam. Surely, boy. I'll never refuse money. But, lest he should engage the great room in the inn, run thou and tell him.—Stop, I'll go myself—A short cut through that garden.

Banks. Why you, or any neighbour, is welcome to walk in it, or to partake of what it produces, but making it a common thoroughfare is—

F. Gam. Here, Sim, kick open that garden gate.

Banks. What?

F. Gam. Does the lad hear?

Sim. Why, yes, yes.

F. Gam. Does the fool understand?

Sim. Dang it, I'm as yet but young; but if understanding teaches me how to wrong my neighbour, I hope I may never live to years of discretion.

F. Gam. What, you cur, do you disobey your feyther? Burst open the garden gate, as I command you.

Sim. Feyther, He that made both you and the garden, commands me not to injure the unfortunate.

F. Gam. Here's an ungracious rogue! Then I must do it myself. [*Advances.*

Banks. [*Stands before it.*] Hold, neighbour. Small as this spot is, it's now my only possession; and the man shall first take my life, who sets a foot in it against my will.

F. Gam. I'm in such a passion.—

Jane. [*Comes forward.*] Feyther, if you are in a passion, read the good book you gave me.

F. Gam. Plague of the wench! But, you hussy, I'll—and you, you unlucky bird!

[*Exeunt* SIM *and* JANE.

[*A shower of rain.*]—*Enter* ROVER *hastily.*

Rover. Zounds! here's a pelting shower, and no shelter! "Poor Tom's a-cold;" I'm wet through—Oh, here's a fair promising house.

[*Going to* GAMMON'S.

F. Gam. [*Stops him.*] Hold, my lad. Can't let folks in, till I know who they are. There's a public house not above a mile on.

Banks. Step in here, young man: my fire is small, but it shall cheer you with a hearty welcome.

Rover. [*To* BANKS.] The poor cottager! [*To* GAMMON.] And the substantial farmer! *Kneels.*] "Hear, Nature, dear goddess, hear! If ever you designed to make his corn-fields fruitful, change thy purpose; that, from the blighted ear no grain may fall to fat his *stubble goose*—and, when to town he drives his hogs, so like himself, oh, let him feel the soaking rain; then may he curse his crime too late, and know how sharper than a serpent's tooth 'tis"—Damme, but I'm spouting in the rain all this time.

[*Jumps up and runs into* BANKS'S.

F. Gam. Ay, neighbour, you'll soon scratch a beggar's head, if you harbour every mad vagrant. This may be one of the footpads, that, it seems, have got about the country; but I'll have an execution, and seize on thy goods, this day, my charitable neighbour! Eh, the sun strikes out, quite cleared up.

Enter JANE.

Jane. La, feyther, if there isn't coming down the village—

F. Gam. Ah, thou hussy!

Jane. Bless me, feyther! No time for anger now. Here's Lady Amaranth's chariot, drawn by her new grand long-tailed horses.—La! it stops!

F. Gam. Her ladyship is coming out, and walks this way.—She may wish to rest herself in my house. Jane, we must always make rich folks welcome.

Jane. Dear me, I'll run in and set things to rights. But, feyther, your cravat and wig are all got so rumplified with your cross-grained tantarums. I'll tie your neck in a big beau, and for your wig, if there is

any flour in the drudging-box.—[*Adjusts them, and runs into the house.*]

F. Geo. Oh! the bailiff too that I engaged.

Enter TWITCH.

Twitch. Well, Master Gammon, as you desired, I'm come to serve this here warrant of yours, and arrest Master Banks; where is he?

F. Gam. Yes, now I be's determined on't—he's —Zounds! stand aside, I'll speak to you anon.

[*Looking out.*

Enter LADY AMARANTH, ZACHARIAH *following.*

Lady Am. Friend, Jane, whom I have taken to be my handmaid, is thy daughter?

F. Gam. Ay, so her mother said, an't please your ladyship.

Lady Am. Ephraim Smooth acquainteth me thou art a wealthy yeoman.

F. Gam. Why, my lady, I pay my rent.

Lady Am. Being yet a stranger on my estate around here, I have passed through thy hamlet to behold with mine own eye the distresses of my poor tenants. I wish to relieve their wants.

F. Gam. Right, your ladyship: for charity hides a deal of sins. How good of you to think of the poor! that's so like me; I'm always contriving how to relieve my neighbours—you must lay Banks in gaol to-night. [*Apart to* TWITCH.

Enter JANE.

Jane. An't please you, will your ladyship enter our humble dwelling, and rest your ladyship in feyther's great cane-bottom'd elbow-chair, with a high back? [*Courtesies.*

F. Gam. Do, my lady. To receive so great a body from her own chariot is an honour I dreamt not of; though, for the hungry and weary-foot traveller, my

doors are always open, and my morsel ready. Knock; when he comes out, touch him. [*Aside to* TWITCH.

Lady Am. Thou art benevolent, and I will enter thy dwelling with satisfaction.

Jane. O precious! this way, my lady.

[*Exeunt all but* TWITCH.

Twitch. Eh, where's the warrant? [*Feels his pocket, and knocks at* BANKS'S *door.*

Enter BANKS.

Banks. Master Twitch! What's your business with me?

Twitch. Only a little affair here against you.

Banks. Me!

Twitch. Yes; Farmer Gammon has bought a thirty pound note of hand of yours.

Banks. Indeed! Well, I didn't think his malice could have stretched so far—I thought the love he professed for my sister might,—why, it is true, Master Twitch, to lend our indigent cottagers small sums, when they've been unable to pay their rents, I got lawyer Quirk to procure me this money, and hoped their industry would have put it in my power to take up my note before now. However, I'll go round and try what they can do, then call on you and settle it.

Twitch. You must go with me.

Rover. [*Without.*] Old gentleman, come quick, or I'll draw another bottle of your currant wine.

Twitch. You'd best not make a noise, but come.

[*To* BANKS.

Enter ROVER.

Rover. Oh, you're here! Rain over—quite fine—I'll take a sniff of the open air too—Eh, what's the matter?

Twitch. What's that to you?

Rover. What's that to me? Why, you're a very unmannerly—

Twitch. Oh, here's a rescue!

Banks. Nay, my dear sir, I'd wish you not to bring yourself into trouble about me.

Twitch. Now, since you don't know what's civil, if the debt's not paid directly, to jail you go.

Rover. My kind, hospitable, good old man to jail! What's the amount, you scoundrel?

Twitch. Better words, or I'll—

Rover. Stop; utter you a word good or bad, except to tell me what's your demand on this gentleman, and I'll give you the greatest beating you ever got since the hour you commenced rascal. [*In a low tone.*]

Twitch. Why, master, I don't want to quarrel with you, because—

Rover. You'll get nothing by it. Do you know, you villain, that I am this moment the greatest man living?

Twitch. Who, pray?

Rover. "I am the bold Thunder!" Sirrah, know that I carry my purse of gold in my coat-pocket. Though damme if I know how a purse came there. [*Aside, and takes it out.*] There's twenty pictures of his majesty; therefore, in the king's name, I free his liege subject; [*Takes* BANKS *away.*] and now who am I? Ah! ah!

Twitch. Ten pieces short, my master; but if you're a housekeeper, I'll take this and your bail.

Rover. Then for bail you must have a housekeeper? What's to be done!

Enter GAMMON.

Ah, here's old hospitality! I know you've a house, though your fire-side was too warm for me. Look ye, here's some rapacious, griping rascal, has had this worthy gentleman arrested. Now a certain, good-for-nothing, rattling fellow has paid twenty guineas;

you pass your word for the other nine, we'll step back into the old gentleman's friendly house, and over his currant wine, our first toast shall be, Liberty to the honest debtor, and confusion to the hard-hearted creditor.

F. Gam. I sha'n't.

Rover. Sha'n't! what's your name?

F. Gam. Gammon.

Rover. Gammon! Dem'me, you're the Hampshire hog. [*Exit* F. GAMMON.] 'Sdeath! how shall I do to extricate—? I wish I had another purse in my waistcoat pocket.

Enter LADY AMARANTH, *from* GAMMON'S, ZACHARIAH *following.*

Lady Am. What tumult's this?

Rover. A lady! Ma'am, your most obedient humble servant. [*Bows.*] A quaker too! They are generally kind and humane, and that face is the prologue to a play of a thousand good acts—may be she'd help us here. [*Aside.*] Ma'am, you must know that—that I—no—this gentleman—I mean this gentleman and I—He got a little behind-hand, as every honest, well-principled man often may, from—bad harvests and rains—lodging corn—and his cattle—from murrain, and—rot the murrain! you know this is the way all this affair happened, [*To* BANKS.] and then steps up this gentleman, [*To* TWITCH.] with a —a tip in his way—madam, you understand? And then in steps I—with my a—In short, madam, I am the worst story-teller in the world, where myself is the hero of the tale.

Twitch. Mr. Banks has been arrested for thirty pounds, and this gentleman has paid twenty guineas of the debt.

Banks. My litigious neighbour to expose me thus!

Lady Am. The young man and maiden within have spoken well of thy sister, and pictured thee as a man of irreproachable morals, though unfortunate.

Rover. Madam, he's the honestest fellow—I've known him above forty years, he has the best hand at stirring a fire—If you was only to taste his currant wine.

Banks. Madam, I never aspired to an enviable rank in life; but hitherto pride and prudence kept me above the reach of pity: but obligations from a stranger—

Lady Am. He! really a stranger, and attempt to free thee! But, friend, [*To* ROVER.] thou hast assumed a right which here belongeth alone to me. As I enjoy the blessings which these lands produce, I own also the heart-delighting privilege of dispensing those blessings to the wretched. Thou mad'st thyself my worldly banker, and no cash of mine in thine hands, [*Takes a note from a pocket-book.*] but thus I balance our account. [*Offers it.*

Rover. "Madam, my master pays me, nor can I take money from another hand, without injuring his honour, and disobeying his commands."

"Run, run, Orlando, carve on every tree,
The fair, the chaste, the unexpressive she."

[*Runs off.*

Banks. But, sir, I insist you'll return him his money. [*To* TWITCH.] Stop! [*Going.*

Twitch. Ay, stop! [*Holds the skirts of his coat.*

Lady Am. Where dwelleth he?

Banks. I fancy, where he can, madam. I understand from his discourse, that he was on his way to join a company of actors in the next town.

Lady Am. A profane stage-player with such a gentle, generous heart! Yet so whimsically wild, like the unconscious rose, modestly shrinking from the recollection of its own grace and sweetness.

Enter JANE, *from the house, more dressed.*

Jane. Now, my lady, I'm fit to attend your ladyship. I look so genteelish, mayhap her ladyship may take me home with her.

Lady Am. This maiden may find out for me whither he goeth. [*Aside.*] Call on my steward, and thy legal demands shall be satisfied. [*To* TWITCH.

Jane. Here, coachman, drive up my lady's chariot, nearer to the door. [*Calls off.*] Charott! If she'd take me with her, la! how all the folks will stare. [*Aside.*] Madam, though the roads are so very dusty, I'll walk all the way on foot to your ladyship's house—ay, though I should spoil my bran-new petticoat.

Lady Am. Rather than sully thy garment, thou shalt be seated by me. Friend, be cheerful; thine and thy sister's sorrows shall be but an April shower.

Jane. Oh, your ladyship! Ecod, if I didn't think so— [*Aside.*

Enter SIM.

Here, you Sim, order the charott for us.

Sim. Us! Come, come, Jane, I've the little tilt cart to carry you.

Jane. Cart! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

Before an Inn.

Enter ROVER *and* WAITER.

Rover. Hillo! friend, when does the coach set out for London?

Waiter. In about an hour, sir.

Rover. Has the Winchester coach passed?

Waiter. No, sir. [*Exit*.

Rover. That's lucky! then my trunk is here still. Go I will not. Since I've lost the fellowship of my friend Dick, I'll travel no more, I'll try a London audience; who knows but I may get an engagement? This celestial lady quaker! She must be rich, and ridiculous for such a poor dog as I am, even to think of her. How Dick would laugh at me if he knew—I dare say by this she has released my kind host from the gripe—I should like to be certain though.

Enter LANDLORD.

Land. You'll dine here, sir? I'm honest Bob Johnstone; kept the Sun these twenty years. Excellent dinner on table at two.

Rover. "Yet my love indeed is appetite; I'm as hungry as the sea, and can digest as much."

Land. Then you won't do for my shilling ordinary, sir; there's a very good ordinary at the Saracen's Head, at the end of the town. Shouldn't have thought indeed, hungry foot travellers to eat like—— coming, sir. [*Exit*.

Rover. I'll not join this company at Winchester. I will take a touch at a London theatre. The public there are candid and generous, and before my merit can have time to create enemies, I'll save money, and—"a fig for the Sultan and Sophy."

Enter JANE, *at the back, and* SIM *watching her*.

Jane. Ay, that's he!

Rover. But if I fail, by Heaven I'll overwhelm the manager, his empire, and—"himself in one prodigious ruin."

Jane. Ruin! Oh Lord! [*Runs backs*.

Sim. What can you expect, when you follow young men? I've dodged you all the way.

Jane. Well! wasn't I sent?

Sim. Oh yes, you were sent—very likely. Who sent you?

Jane. I was—I won't tell it's my lady, 'cause she bid me not. [*Aside.*

Sim. I'll keep you from sheame—a fine life I should have in the parish, rare fleering, if a sister of moine should stand some Sunday at church in a white sheet, and to all their flouts what could I say?

Rover. Thus, "I say my sister's wrong'd, my sister *Blowsabella*, born as high and noble as the *attorney*—do her justice, or by the gods I'll lay a scene of blood, shall make this *haymow* horrible to Beebles."—"Say that, Chamont."

Sim. I believe it's full moon. You go hoame to your place, and moind your business.

Jane. My lady will be so pleased I found him! I don't wonder at it, he's such a fine-spoken man.

Sim. Dang it! Will you stand here grinning at the wild bucks.

Jane. Perhaps the gentleman might wish to send her ladyship a compliment. An't please you, sir, if it's even a kiss between us two, it shall go safe; for, though you should give it me, brother Sim then can take it to my lady.

Rover. "I'd kiss thee ere I kill'd thee."

Jane. Kill me!

Rover. "No way but this, killing myself, to die upon a kiss!" [*Advancing.*

Sim. Go! [*To* JANE—*puts her out.*

Rover. "Ay; to a nunnery go, go." I'm cursedly out of spirits; but hang sorrow, I may as well divert myself—"'Tis meat and drink for me to see a clown."—"Shepherd, was't ever at court?"

Sim. Not I.

Rover. "Then thou art damn'd."

Sim. Eh!

Rover. Ay, "thou art damn'd like an ill-roasted egg—all on one side."—Little Hospitality.

[*Looking out.*

Enter FARMER GAMMON.

F. Gam. Eh, where's the showman that wants to hire my barn? So, Madam Jane, I place her out to sarvice, and instead of attending her mistress, she gets gallopping all about the village.—How's this son?

Rover. "Your son? Young Clodpate, take him to your wheat stack, and there teach him manners."

F. Gam. Ah, thou'rt the fellow that would bolt out of the dirty roads, into people's houses. Ho, ho, ho! Sim's schooling is mightily thrown away if he hasn't got more manners than thou.

Sim. Why, feyther, it is!—Gadzooks, he be one of the play! Acted Tom Fool, in King Larry, at Lymington, t'other night—I thought I knowed the face, thof he had a straw cap and a blanket about'n—Ho, ho! how comical that was when you said—

Rover. "Pillicock sat upon Pillicock hill, pil—i—loo, loo!"

Sim. That's it! He's at it! [*Claps.*] Laugh, feyther.

F. Gam. Hold your tongue, boy! I believe he's no better than he should be. The moment I saw him, says I to myself, *you are a rogue.*

Rover. There you spoke truth for once in your life.

F. Gam. I'm glad to hear you confess it. But her ladyship shall have the vagrants whipped out of the country.

Rover. Vagrant! "Thou wretch! despite o'erwhelm thee!" "Only squint, and, by Heaven, I'll beat thy blown body till it rebounds like a tennis-ball."

Sim. Beat my feyther! No, no. Thou must first beat me. [*Puts himself in a posture of defence.*

Rover. [*Aside, with great feeling.*] "Though love cool, friendship fall off, brothers divide, subjects rebel, oh! never let the sacred bond be cracked 'twixt son and father!"—I never knew a father's protection, never had a father to protect.

[*Puts his handkerchief to his eyes.*

Sim. Ecod! he's not acting now!

Enter LANDLORD, *with a book, pen, and ink.*

F. Gam. Landlord, is this Mr. Lamp here?

Land. I've just opened a bottle for him and t'other in the parlour.

Rover. "Go, father, with thy son: give him a livery more guarded than his fellows."

Sim. Livery! Why, I be no servant man, though sister Jane is. Gi's thy hand. [*To* ROVER.] I don't know how 'tis: but I think I could lose my life for him: but mustn't let feyther be lickt though—No, no! [*Going, turns and looks at* ROVER.] Ecod, I ne'er shall forget Pillicock!

[*Exeunt* FARMER GAMMON *and* SIM.

Rover. Thou art an honest reptile. I'll make my entrée on the London boards in Bayes; yes, I shall have no comparison against me. "Egad, it's very hard that a gentleman and an author can't come to teach them, but he must break his nose, and—and—all that—but—so the players are gone to dinner."

Land. No such people frequent the Sun, I assure you.

Rover. "Sun, moon, and stars!"—Now mind the eclipse, Mr. Johnstone.

Land. I heard nothing of it, sir.

Rover. "There's the sun between the earth and the moon—there's the moon between the earth and the sun, tol, lol, lol! dance the hay! Luna means to show her tail.

Enter WAITER.

Waiter. Two gentleman in the parlour would speak with you.

Rover. "I attend them, were they twenty times our mother."

Waiter. Your mother, sir! why it is two gentlemen.

Rover. Say I attend them with all respect and duty. [*Exit* WAITER.

Land. Sir, you go in the stage; as we book the passengers, what name?

Rover. "I am the bold Thunder." [*Exit.*

Land. [*Writing.*] Mr. Thunder.

Enter JOHN DORY.

John. I want two places in the stage coach, because I and another gentleman are going a voyage.

Land. Just two vacant; what name?

John. Avast! I go aloft. But let's see who'll be my master's messmates in the cabin: [*Reads.*] Captain Maccolah, Counsellor Fazacherly, Miss Gosling, Mr. Thunder. What's this? speak, man! is there one of that name going?

Land. Booked him this minute.

John. If our voyage should now be at an end before we begin it?—If this Mr. Thunder should be my master's son!—What rate is this vessel?

Land. Rate!

John. What sort of a gentleman is he?

Land. Oh! a rum sort of a gentleman; I suspect he's one of the players.

John. True; Sam said it was some player's people coaxed him away from Portsmouth school. It must be the 'squire—show me where he's moored, my old purser. [*Exit, singing, and* LANDLORD *following.*

SCENE III.

A Room in the Inn.

LAMP *and* TRAP, [*discovered drinking.*]

Trap. This same Farmer Gammon seems a surly spark.

Lamp. No matter. His barn will hold a good thirty pounds, and if I can but engage this young fellow, this Rover, he'll cram it every night he plays. He's certainly a devilish good actor. Now, Trap, you must enquire out a carpenter, and be brisk about the building. I think we shall have smart business, as we stand so well for pretty women, too. Oh, here he is!

Trap. Snap him at any terms.

Enter ROVER.

Rover. Gentleman, your most obedient—The waiter told me—

Lamp. Sir, to our better acquaintance. [*Fills.*]

Rover. I don't recollect I have the honour of knowing—

Lamp. Mr. Rover, though I am a stranger to you, your merit is none to me.

Rover. Sir, [*Bows.*]

Lamp. Yes, sir, my name is Lamp: I am manager of the company of comedians that's come down here, and Mr. Trap is my treasurer, engages performers, sticks bills, finds properties, keeps box books, prompts play, and takes the town.

Trap. The most reputable company, and charming money-getting circuit. [*Apart to* ROVER.]

Rover. Hav'n't a doubt, sir.

Lamp. Only suffer me to put up your name to play with us six nights, and twelve guineas are yours.

Rover. Sir, I thank you, and must confess your offer is liberal; but my friends have flattered me into a sort of opinion that encourages me to take a touch at the capital.

Lamp. Ah, my dear Mr. Rover, a London theatre is dangerous ground.

Rover. Why, I may fail, and gods may groan, and ladies drawl, "La, what an awkward creature!" but should I top my part, then shall gods applaud, and ladies sigh, "The charming fellow!" and treasurers smile upon me, as they count the shining guineas!

Lamp. But suppose—

Rover. Ay, suppose the contrary, I have a certain friend here, in my coat pocket [*Puts his hand in his pocket.*] Eh! zounds! where is—oh, the devil! I gave it to discharge my kind host—going for London, and not master of five shillings! [*Aside.*] "Sir, to return to the twenty pounds."

Lamp. Twenty pounds! Well, let it be so.

Rover. Sir, I engage with you, call a rehearsal when and where you please, I'll attend.

Lamp. Sir, I'll step for the cast-book, and you shall chuse your characters.

Trap. And, sir, I'll write out the play-bills directly. [*Exeunt* LAMP *and* TRAP.

Rover. Since I must remain here some time, and I've not the most distant hope of ever speaking to this goddess again, I wish I had enquired her name, that I might know how to keep out of her way.

Enter JOHN DORY *and* LANDLORD.

Land. There's the gentleman.

John. Very well. [*Exit* LANDLORD. What cheer, ho, master squire?

Rover. Cheer, ho! my hearty!

John. The very face of his father! And an't you ashamed of yourself!

Rover. Why, yes, I am sometimes.

John. Do you know, if I had you at the gangway, I'd give you a neater dozen than ever you got from your schoolmaster's cat-a-nine tails.

Rover. You wouldn't sure?

John. I would sure.

Rover. Indeed?—Pleasant enough! who is this genius?

John. I've dispatched a shallop to tell lady Amaranth you're here.

Rover. You ha'vn't?

John. I have.

Rover. Now, who the devil's Lady Amaranth?

John. I expect her chariot every moment, and when it comes, you'll get into it, and I'll get into it, and I'll set you down genteelly at her house; then I'll have obeyed my orders, and I hope your father will be satisfied.

Rover. My father! who's he, pray?

John. Pshaw! leave off your fun, and prepare to ask his pardon.

Rover. Ha, ha, ha! Why, my worthy friend, you are totally wrong in this affair. Upon my word I'm not the person you take me for. [*Going.*]

John. You don't go, though they've got your name down to the stage-coach book, Mr. Thunder.

Rover. Mr. Thunder! stage-coach book! [*Pauses.*] ha, ha, ha! This must be some curious blunder.

John. Oh! my lad, your father, Sir George, will change your note.

Rover. He must give me one first. Sir George! then my father is a knight, it seems; ha, ha, ha! very good, faith! 'pon my honour, I am not the gentleman that you think me.

John. I ought not to think you any gentleman for

giving your honour in a falsehood. Oh! them play-actors you went amongst have quite spoiled you. I wish only one of 'em would come in my way, I'd teach 'em to bring a gentleman's son tramboozing about the country.

Enter WAITER.

Waiter. Her ladyship's chariot's at the door, and I fancy it's you, sir, the coachman wants.

John. Yes, it's me. I attend your honour.

Rover. Then you insist on it that I am—

John. I insist on nothing, only you shall come.

Rover. Indeed! Shall! Shall is a word don't sound over agreeable to my ears.

John. Does a pretty girl sound well to your ear?

Rover. "More music in the clink of her horses' hoofs than twenty hautboys." Why, is this Lady Thing-o-me pretty?

John. Beautiful as a mermaid, and stately as a ship under sail.

Rover. Egad! I've a mind to humour the frolic—Well, well, I'll see your mermaid. But then on the instant of my appearance the mistake must be discovered. [*Aside.*] Harky, is this father of mine you talk of at this lady's?

John. No: your father's in chase of the deserters. I find he's afraid to face the old one, so, if I tell him, he won't go with me. [*Aside.*] No, no, we sha'n't see him in a hurry.

Rover. Then I'll venture. Has the lady ever seen me?

John. Pshaw! none of your jokes, man! you know that her ladyship, no more than myself, has set eyes upon you since you was the bigness of a rumbo canakin.

Rover. The choice is made. I have my Ranger's dress in my trunk: "Cousin of Buckingham, thou sage, grave man!"

John. What?

Rover. "Since you will buckle fortune on my back, to bear her burthen, whether I will or no, I must have patience to endure the load; but if black scandal, or foul-faced"——

John. Black! my foul face was as fair as yours before I went to sea.

Rover. "Your mere enforcement shall acquittance me."

John. Man, don't stand preaching parson Sacks —come to the chariot.

Rover. Ay, to the chariot! "Bear me, Bucephalus, among the billows,—hey! for the Tygris!" [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

LADY AMARANTH'S *House.*

Enter LADY AMARANTH *and* EPHRAIM.

Lady Am. Though thou hast settled that distressed gentleman's debt, let his sister come unto me; and remit a quarter's rent unto all my tenants.

Eph. As thou bidd'st, I have discharged from the pound the widow's cattle; but shall I let the lawsuit drop against the farmer's son who did shoot the pheasant?

Lady Am. Yea; but instantly turn from my service the gamekeeper's man that did kill the fawn, while it was eating from his hand. We should hate guile, though we may love venison.

Eph. I love a young doe. [*Aside.*] Since the death

of friend Dovehouse, who, (though one of the faithful) was an active magistrate, this part of the country is infested with covetous men called robbers, and I have, in thy name, said unto the people, whoever apprehendeth one of these, I will reward him, yea, with thirty pieces of gold. [*A loud knocking without.*] That beating of one brass against another at thy door, proclaimeth the approach of vanity, whose pride of heart swelleth at an empty sound. [*Exit.*

Lady Am. But my heart is possessed with the idea of that wandering youth, whose benevolence induced him to part with, perhaps his all, to free the unhappy debtor. His person is amiable, his address (according to worldly modes) formed to please, to delight. But he's poor; is that a crime? Perhaps meanly born: but one good action is an illustrious pedigree. I feel I love him, and in that word are birth, fame, and riches.

Enter JANE.

Jane. Madam, my lady, an't please you—

Lady Am. Didst thou find the young man, that I may return him the money he paid for my tenant?

Jane. I found him, ma'am, and—I found him, and he talked of—what he said.

Lady Am. What did he say?

Jane. He saw me, ma'am, and call'd me Blowsabella, and said he would—I'll be hang'd, ma'am, if he didn't say he would—Now, think of that;—but if he hadn't gone to London in the stage coach—

Lady Am. Is he gone? [*With emotion.*

Enter JOHN DORY.

John. O, my lady, mayhap John Dory is not the man to be sent after young gentlemen that scamper from school, and run about the country play-acting! Pray walk up stairs, Master Thunder. [*Calls off.*

Lady Am. Hast thou brought my kinsman hither?

John. Well, I hav'n't then.

Jane. If you hav'n't, why do you make a talk about it?

John. Well, don't give me your palaver, young Miss Slip Slop.—Will you only walk up, if you please, Master Harry?

Jane. Will you walk up, if you please, Master Harry?

Lady Am. Friendship requireth, yet I am not disposed to commune with company. [*Aside.*

Jane. O, bless me, ma'am! if it isn't—

Enter ROVER, *drest.*

Rover. "'Tis I, Hamlet the Dane!"—"Thus far into the bowels of the land have we marched on."—"John, that bloody and devouring boar!"

John. He called me bull in the coach.

Jane. I don't know what brought such a bull in the coach.

Rover. This the Lady Amaranth! By Heavens, the very angel quaker!

Lady Am. [*Turns.*] The dear, generous youth, my cousin Harry!

John. There he's for you, my lady, and make the most of him.

Jane. Oh, how happy my lady is! he looks so charming now he's fine.

John. Harky! she's as rich as a Spanish Indiaman; and I tell you, your father wishes you'd grapple her by the heart—court her, you mad devil. [*Apart to* ROVER.] There's an engagement to be between these two vessels: but little Cupid's the only man that's to take minutes, so come. [*To* JANE.

Jane. Ma'am, an't I wait to on you?

John. No, my lass, you're to wait on me.

Jane. Wait on this great sea-bull! lack-a-daisy! am I—am—

John. By this Sir George is come to the inn. With-

out letting the younker know, I'll go and bring him here, and smuggle both father and son into a joyful meeting. [*Aside.*] [*To* JANE.] Come now, usher me down like a lady.

Jane. This way, Mr. Sailor Gentleman.

[*Exeunt* JOHN *and* JANE.

Rover. By Heavens, a most delectable woman!

[*Aside.*

Lady Am. Cousin, when I saw thee in the village free the sheep from the wolf, why didst not tell me then thou wert son to my uncle, Sir George?

Rover. Because, my lady, then I—didn't know it myself. [*Aside.*

Lady Am. Why wouldst vex thy father, and quit thy school?

Rover. "A truant disposition, good my lady, brought me from Wirtemberg."

Lady Am. Thy father designs thee for his dangerous profession; but is thy inclination turned to the voice of trumpets and smites of mighty slaughter?

Rover. "Why, ma'am, as for old Boreas, my dad, when the blast of war blows in my ears, he's a tyger in his fierce resentment."—But for me, "I think it a pity, so it is, that villainous saltpetre should be digg'd out of the bowels of the harmless earth, which many a good tall fellow has destroyed, with wounds and guns, and drums, Heav'n save the mark!"

Lady Am. Indeed thou art tall, my cousin, and grown of comely stature. Our families have long been separated.

Rover. They have—since Adam, I believe—[*Aside.*] "Then, lady, let that sweet bud of love now ripen to a beauteous flower."

Lady Am. Love!

Rover. "Excellent wench! perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee, and when I love thee not, chaos is come again."

Lady Am. Thou art of an happy disposition.

Rover. "If I were now to die, 'twere now to be most happy." "Let our senses dance in concert to the joyful minutes, and this, and this, the only discord make." [*Embracing.*

Enter JANE, *with cake and wine.*

Jane. Ma'am, an't please you, Mr. Zachariah bid me——

Rover. "Why, you fancy yourself Cardinal Wolsey in this family."

Jane. No, sir, I'm not Cardinal Wolsey, I'm only my lady's maid here—Jenny Gammon, at your service.

Rover. "A bowl of cream for your Catholic majesty."

Jane. Cream! No, sir, it's wine and water.

Rover. "You get no water, take the wine, great potentate."—[*Gives* LADY AMARANTH *a glass, then drinks.*]

Jane. Madam, my father begs leave—

Rover. "Go, go, thou shallow Pomona."—[*Puts her out.*] Eh! Zounds! here's my manager.

Enter FARMER GAMMON *and* LAMP.

F. Gam. I hope her ladyship hasn't found out 'twas I had Banks arrested. [*Aside.*]—Would your ladyship give leave for this here honest man and his comrades to act a few plays in the town, 'cause I've let'n my barn; 'twill be some little help to me, my lady.

Rover. My lady, I understand these affairs. Leave me to settle 'em.

Lady Am. True; these are delusions, as a woman, I understand not. But by my cousin's advice I will abide; ask his permission.

F. Gam. So; I must pay my respects to the young squire. [*Aside.*] An't please your honour, if a poor man like me [*Bows.*] durst offer my humble duty—

Rover. Canst thou bow to a vagrant? Eh, Little Hospitality?

[FARMER GAMMON *looks in his face, and sneaks off.*

Lamp. Please your honour, if I may presume to hope you'll be graciously pleased to take our little squad under your honour's protection—

Rover. Ha!

Lady Am. What say'st thou, Henry?

Rover. Ay, where's Henry? Gadso! True, that's me. Strange I should already forget my name, and not half an hour since I was christened! [*Aside.*] Harky! do you play yourself? Eh! Ha! Hem! [*Vapouring.*] fellow?

Lamp. Yes, sir; and, sir, I have just now engaged a new actor, Mr. Rover. Such an actor!

Rover. Eh! What! you've engaged that—what's his name, Rover? If such is your best actor, you sha'n't have my permission. My dear madam, the worst fellow in the world. Get along out of town, or I'll have all of you, man, woman, child, stick, rag, and fiddlestick, clapt into the whirligig.

Lady Am. Good man, abide not here.

Rover. Eh! What, my friend? Now, indeed, if this new actor you brag of, this crack of your company, was any thing like a gentleman—

Lamp. [*Stares.*] It isn't!——

Rover. It is. My good friend, if I was really the unfortunate poor strolling dog you thought me, I should tread your four boards, and crow the cock of your barn-door fowl; but as fate has ordained that I'm a gentleman, and son to Sir—Sir—what the devil's my father's name? [*Aside.*] You must be content to murder Shakspeare without making me an accomplice.

Lamp. But, my most gentle sir, I, and my treasurer, Trap, have trumpeted your fame ten miles round the country;—the bills are posted, the stage built, the candles booked, fiddles engaged; all on the tip-top

of expectation. We should have to-morrow night an overflow, ay, thirty pounds. Dear, worthy sir, you wou'dn't go to ruin a whole community and their families that now depend only on the exertion of your brilliant talents?

Rover. Eh! I never was uniform but in one maxim; that is, though I do little good, to hurt nobody but myself.

Lady Am. Since thou hast promised, much as I prize my adherence to those customs in which I was brought up, thou shalt not sully thy honour by a breach of thy word. Play, if it can bring good to these people.

Rover. Shall I?

Lady Am. This falleth out well; for I have bidden all the gentry round unto my house-warming, and these pleasantries may afford them a cheerful and innocent entertainment.

Rover. True, my lady; your guests ar'n't quakers though you are; and when we ask people to our house, we study to please them, not ourselves. But if we do furbish a play or two, the muses sha'n't honour that churlish fellow's barn. No; the god, that illumines the soul of genius, should never visit the iron door of inhumanity. No Gammon's barn for me!—

Lady Am. Barn! no; that gallery shall be thy theatre; and in spite of the grave doctrines of Ephraim Smooth, my friends and I will behold and rejoice in thy pranks, my pleasant cousin.

Rover. My kind, my charming lady! Hey, brighten up, bully Lamp, carpenters, tailor, manager, distribute your box tickets for my lady's gallery. "Come, gentle coz,"

"The actors are at hand, and by their show
You shall know all
That you are like to know." [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Inn.

Enter HARRY *and* MIDGE.

Harry. Though I went back to Portsmouth academy with a contrite heart, to continue my studies, yet, from my father's angry letter, I dread a woeful storm at our first meeting. I fancy the people at this inn don't recollect me; it reminds me of my pleasant friend, poor Jack Rover—I wonder where he is now.

Midge. And brings to my memory a certain stray vaguing acquaintance of mine, poor Dick Buskin.

Harry. Ha! ha! ha! Then I desire, sir, you'll turn Dick Buskin again out of your memory.

Midge. Can't, sir. The dear, good-natured, wicked son of a—— beg your honour's pardon.

Harry. Oh, but, Midge, you must, as soon as I'm dressed, step out and enquire whose house is this my father's at; I did not think he had any acquaintance in this part of the country. Sound what humour he's in, and how the land lies, before I venture in his presence. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SIR GEORGE THUNDER, *agitated, and* LANDLORD.

Sir. Geo. I can hear nothing of these deserters; yet, by my first intelligence, they'll not venture up to London. They must still be lurking about the country. Landlord, have any suspicious persons put in at your house?

Land. Yes, sir; now and then.

Sir Geo. Zounds! what do you do with them?

Land. Why, sir, when a man calls for liquor,

that I think has no money, I make him pay beforehand.

Sir Geo. Damn your liquor, you self-interested porpoise! Chatter your own private concerns, when the public good, or fear of general calamity, should be the only compass! These fellows, that I'm in pursuit of, have run from their ships; if our navy's unmann'd, what becomes of you and your house, you dunghill cormorant?

Land. This is a very abusive sort of a gentleman; but he has a full pocket, or he wou'dn't be so saucy. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. This rascal, I believe, doesn't know I'm Sir George Thunder. Winds, still variable, blow my affairs right athwart each other.—To know what's become of my runagate son Harry,—and there my rich lady niece, pressing and squeezing up the noble plumage of our illustrious family in her little mean quaker bonnet. But I must up to town after—'Sblood, when I catch my son Harry!—Oh, here's John Dory.

Enter JOHN DORY.

Have you taken the places in the London coach for me?

John. Hahoy! your honour, is that yourself?

Sir Geo. No, I'm beside myself—heard any thing of my son?—

John. What's o'clock?

Sir Geo. What do you talk of clocks or time-pieces—All glasses, reck'ning, and log-line, are run mad with me.

John. If it's two, your son is at this moment walking with Lady Amaranth in her garden.

Sir Geo. With Lady Amaranth!

John. If half after, they're cast anchor to rest themselves amongst the posies; if three, they're got up again; if four, they're picking a bit of cramm'd

fowl; and, if half after, they're picking their teeth, and cracking walnuts over a bottle of Calcavella.

Sir Geo. My son! my dear friend, where did you find him?

John. Why, I found him where he was, and I left him where he is.

Sir Geo. What, and he came to Lady Amaranth's?

John. No; but I brought him there from this house, in her ladyship's chariot. I won't tell him Master Harry went amongst the players, or he'd never forgive him. [*Aside*]. Oh! such a merry, civil, crazy, crack-brain! The very picture of your honour.

Sir Geo. Ha! ha! ha! What, he's in high spirits? ha! ha! ha! the dog! [*Joyfully*] But I hope he's had discretion enough to throw a little gravity over his mad humour, before his prudent cousin?

John. He threw himself on his knees before her, and that did quite as well.

Sir Geo. Ha! ha! ha! made love to her already! Oh, the impudent, the cunning villain! What, and may be he—[*With great glee.*]

John. Indeed he did give her a smack.

Sir Geo. Me! ha! ha! ha!

John. Oh, he's your's! a chip of the old block.

Sir Geo. He is! he is! ha! ha! ha!

John. Oh, he threw his arms around her as eager as I would to catch a falling decanter of Madeira.

Sir Geo. Huzza! victoria! Here will be a junction of bouncing estates! but confound the money. John, you shall have a bowl for a jolly-boat to swim in; roll in here a puncheon of rum, a hogshead of sugar, shake an orchard of oranges, and let the landlord drain his fish-pond yonder. [*Sings.*] "A bumper! a bumper of good liquor," &c.

John. Then, my good master, Sir George, I'll or-

der a bowl in, since you are in the humour for it—"We'll dance a little, and sing a little." [*Singing.*]

[*Exit.*

Sir Geo. And so the wild rogue is this instant rattling up her prim ladyship. Eh, isn't this he? Left her already!

Enter HARRY.

Harry. I must have forgot my cane in this room—My father! Eh! Zounds!

Sir Geo. [*Looks at his watch.*] Just half after four! Why, Harry, you've made great haste in cracking your walnuts!

Harry. Yes; he's heard of my frolics with the players! [*Aside.*] Dear father, if you'll but forgive—

Sir Geo. Why, indeed, Harry, you've acted very bad.

Harry. Sir, it should be considered I was but a novice.

Sir Geo. However, I shall think of nothing now but your benefit.

Harry. Very odd his approving of—[*Aside.*] I thank you, sir, but, if agreeable to you, I've done with benefits.

Sir Geo. If I wasn't the best of fathers, you might indeed hope none from me; but no matter, if you can but get the *fair quaker.*

Harry. Or the humours of the navy, sir?

Sir Geo. What? how dare you reflect on the humours of the navy? The navy has very good humours, or I'd never see your dog's face again, you villain! But I'm cool. What, eh, boy, a snug, easy chariot?

Harry. I'll order it. Waiter, desire my father's carriage to draw up. [*Calls.*

Sir Geo. Mine, you rogue! I've none here. I mean Lady Amaranth's.

Harry. Yes, sir; Lady Amaranth's chariot!
[*Calling.*

Sir Geo. What are you at? I mean that which you left this house in.

Harry. Chariot, sir! I left this house on foot.

Sir Geo. What, with John Dory?

Harry. No, sir, with Jack Rover.

Sir Geo. Why, John has been a rover, to be sure; but now he's settled, since I've made him my valet de chambre.

Harry. Make him your valet! Why, sir, where did you meet him?

Sir Geo. Zounds! I met him on board, and I met him on shore, and in the cabin, steerage, gallery, and forecastle. He sailed round the world with me.

Harry. Strange this, sir! certainly I understood he had been in the East Indies; but he never told me he even knew you; but, indeed, he knew me only by the name of Dick Buskin.

Sir Geo. Then how came he to bring you to Lady Amaranth's?

Harry. Bring me where?

Sir Geo. Answer me. Ar'n't you now come from her ladyship's?

Harry. [*Stares.*] Me? Not I.

Sir Geo. Ha! this is a lie of John's, to enhance his own services. Then you have not been there?

Harry. There! I don't know where you mean, sir.

Sir Geo. Yes; 'tis all a brag of John's, but I'll—

Enter JOHN DORY.

John. The rum and sugar is ready; but as for the fish-pond—

Sir Geo. I'll kick you into it, you thirsty old grampus.

John. Will you? Then I'll make a comical roasted orange.

Sir Geo. How dare you say you brought my son to Lady Amaranth's?

John. And who says I did not?

Sir Geo. He that best should know; only Dick Buskin here.

John. Then Dick Buckskin might find some other amusement than shooting off his guns here.

Sir Geo. Did you bring my son to Lady Amaranth's in her chariot?

John. And to be sure I did.

Sir Geo. There, what do you say to that?

Harry. I say it's false.

John. False! Shiver my hulk, Mr. Buckskin, if you wore a lion's skin I'd curry you for this.

[*Exit in a rage.*

Sir Geo. No, no, John's honest; I see through it now. The puppy has seen her: perhaps he has the impudence not to like her, and so blows up this confusion and perplexity, only to break off a marriage that I've set my heart on.

Harry. What does he mean? Sir, I'll assure you—

Sir Geo. Damn your assurance, you disobedient, ungrateful—I'll not part with you till I confront you with lady Amaranth herself, face to face; and, if I prove you've been deceiving me, I'll launch you into the wide ocean of life, without rudder, compass, grog, or tobacco. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

LADY AMARANTH'S *House.*

Enter LADY AMARANTH, *reading.*

Lady Am. The fanciful flights of my pleasant cousin enchant my senses. This book he gave me to read containeth good moral. The man Shakspeare, that did write it, they call immortal; he must indeed have been filled with a divine spirit. I understand, from my cousin, the origin of plays were religious mysteries; that, freed from the superstition of early, and the grossness of latter, ages, the stage is now the vehicle of delight and morality. If so, to hear a good play, is taking the wholesome draught of precept from a golden cup, embossed with gems; yet, my giving countenance to have one in my house, and even to act in it myself, prove the ascendency, that my dear Harry hath over my heart—Ephraim Smooth is much scandalized at these doings.

Enter EPHRAIM.

Eph. This mansion is now the tabernacle of Baal.
Lady Am. Then abide not in it.
Eph. 'Tis full of the wicked ones.
Lady Am. Stay not amongst the wicked ones.
[*Loud laughing without.*
Eph. I must shut mine ears.
Lady Am. And thy mouth also, good Ephraim. I have bidden my cousin Henry to my house, and I

will not set bounds to his mirth, to gratify thy spleen, and show mine own inhospitality.

Eph. Why dost thou suffer him to put into the hands of thy servants books of tragedies, and books of comedies, prelude, interlude, yea, all lewd. My spirit doth wax wrath. I say unto thee, a playhouse is the school for the old dragon, and a playbook the primmer of Belzebub.

Lady Am. This is one, mark! [*Reads.*] "Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword, the marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe, become them with one half so good a grace as mercy doth. Oh, think on that, and mercy will then breathe within your lips, like man new made!"—Doth Belzebub speak such words?

Eph. Thy kinsman hath made all thy servants actors.

Lady Am. To act well is good service.

Eph. Here cometh the damsel for whom my heart yearneth.

Enter JANE, *reading a paper, joyfully.*

Jane. Oh, ma'am, his honour the 'squire says the play's to be "As you like it."

Eph. I like it not.

Jane. He's given me my character. I'm to be Miss Audrey, and brother Sim's to be William of the forest, as it were. But how am I to get my part by heart?

Lady Am. By often reading it.

Jane. Well, I don't know but that's as good as any other. But I must study my part. "The gods give us joy." [*Exit.*

Eph. Thy maidens skip like young kids.

Lady Am. Then do thou go skip with them.

Eph. Mary, thou shou'dst be obey'd in thine own house, and I will do thy bidding.

Lady Am. Ah, thou hypocrite! To obey is easy, when the heart commands.

Enter ROVER, *pushing by* EPHRAIM.

Rover. Oh, my charming cousin! how agree you and Rosalind! Are you almost perfect? "Eh, what all a-mort, old Clytus?" "Why, you're like an angry fiend, broke in among the laughing gods."—Come, come, I'll have nothing here, but "quips and cranks, and wreathed smiles, such as dwell on Hebe's cheek."

[*Looking at* LADY AMARANTH.

Lady Am. He says we mustn't have this amusement.

Rover. "But I'm a voice potential, double as the Duke's, and I say we must."

Eph. Nay.

Rover. Yea: "By Jupiter, I swear, ay."

[*Music without.*

Eph. I must shut my ears. The man of sin rubbeth the hair of the horse to the bowels of the cat.

Enter LAMP, *with a Violin.*

Lamp. Now, if agreeable to your ladyship, we'll go over your song.

Eph. I will go over it.

[*Snatches the book from* LADY AMARANTH, *throws it on the ground, and steps on it.*

Rover. Trample on Shakspeare! "You sacrilegious thief, that, from a shelf the precious diadem stole, and put it in thy pocket!" [*Takes up the book, and presents it again to* LADY AMARANTH.] Silence, "thou owl of Crete," and the "Cuckoo's song."

Lady Am. To practise it I'm content.

[LAMP *begins to play.* EPHRAIM *jostles him and puts him out of tune.*

Lamp. Why, what's that for, my dear sir?

Eph. Friend, this is a land of freedom, and I've

as much right to move my elbow as thou hast to move thine. [ROVER *pushes him.*] Why dost thou so friend?

Rover: Friend, this is a land of freedom, and I have as much right to move my elbow as thou hast to move thine. [*Mimicking, shoves* EPHRAIM *out.*

Lady Am. But, Harry, do your people of fashion act these follies themselves?

Rover. Ay, and scramble for the top parts as eager as for star, ribband, place, or pension. Lamp, decorate the seats out smart and theatrical, and drill the servants that I've given the small parts to—

[*Exit* LAMP.

Lady Am. I wished for some entertainment, (in which gay people now take delight,) to please those I have invited; but we'll convert these follies into a charitable purpose. Tickets for this day shall be delivered unto my friends gratis; but money to their amount, I will, from my own purse (after rewarding our assistants) distribute amongst the indigent of the village. Thus, whilst we please ourselves, and, perhaps, amuse our friends, we shall make the poor happy. [*Exit.*

Rover. An angel! If Sir George doesn't soon arrive, to blow me, I may, I think, marry her angelic ladyship; but will that be honest? She's nobly born, though I suspect I had ancestors too, if I knew who they were. I certainly entered this house the poorest wight in England, and what must she imagine when I am discovered? That I am a scoundrel; and, consequently, though I should possess her hand and fortune, instead of loving, she'll despise me——[*Sits down.*] I want a friend now, to consult—deceive her I will not. Poor Dick Buskin wants money more than myself, yet this is a measure I'm sure he'd scorn. No, no, I must not.—

Enter HARRY.

Harry. Now I hope my passionate father will be convinced that this is the first time I ever was under this roof. Eh, what beau is here? Astonishing! My old strolling friend!

[*Unperceived, sits by* ROVER.

Rover. Heigho! I don't know what to do.

Harry. [*In the same tone.*] "Nor what to say."

Rover. [*Turns*] Dick Buskin! My dear fellow! Ha! ha! ha! Talk of the devil, and—I was just thinking of you—'Pon my soul, Dick, I'm so happy to see you! [*Shakes hands cordially.*

Harry. But, Jack, eh, perhaps you found me out?

Rover. Found you! I'm sure I wonder how the deuce you found me out. Ah, the news of my intended play has brought you.

Harry. He does'nt know as yet who I am; so I'll carry it on. [*Aside.*] Then you too have broke your engagement with Truncheon, at Winchester; figuring it away in your stage clothes too. Really, tell us what you are at here, Jack?

Rover. Will you be quiet with your Jacking? I'm now 'Squire Harry.

Harry. What?

Rover. I've been pressed into this service by an old man of war, who found me at the inn, and, insisting I am son to a Sir George Thunder, here, in that character, I flatter myself I have won the heart of the charming lady of this house.

Harry. Now the mystery's out. Then it's my friend Jack has been brought here for me! [*Aside.*] Do you know the young gentleman they take you for?

Rover. No: but I flatter myself he is honoured in his representative.

Harry. Upon my soul, Jack, you're a very high fellow.

Rover. I am, now I can put some pounds in your

pockets; you shall be employed—we're getting up "*As you like it.*" Let's see, in the cast have I a part for you?—I'll take Touchstone from Lamp, you shall have it, my boy; I'd resign Orlando to you with any other Rosalind; but the lady of the mansion plays it herself, you rogue.

Harry. The very lady my father intended for me. [*Aside.*] Do you love her, Jack?

Rover. To distraction; but I'll not have her.

Harry. No! Why?

Rover. She thinks me a gentleman, and I'll not convince her I am a rascal. I'll go on with our play, as the produce is appropriated to a good purpose, and then lay down my 'squireship, bid adieu to my heavenly Rosalind, and exit for ever from her house, poor Jack Rover.

Harry. The generous fellow I ever thought him! and he sha'n't lose by it. If I could make him believe—[*Aside.*] Well, this is the most whimsical affair! You've anticipated, superseded me, ha! ha! ha! You'll scarce believe that I'm come here too (purposely though) to pass myself for this young Henry.

Rover. No!

Harry. I am.

Sir Geo. [*Without.*] Harry, where are you?

Rover. Eh! who's that?

Harry. Ah! ah! ah! I'll try it; my father will be cursedly vexed; but no other way. [*Aside.*

Rover. Somebody called Harry—Zounds! "if the real Simon Pure" should be arrived, I'm in a fine way!

Harry. Be quiet—that's my confederate.

Rover. Eh!

Harry. He's to personate the father, Sir George. He started the scheme, having heard that a union was intended, and Sir George not immediately expected—our plan is, if I can, before his arrival, flourish myself into the lady's good graces, and whip her up, as she's an heiress.

Rover. But who is this comrade?

Harry. One of our company, a devilish good actor in the old man.

Rover. So you're turned fortune-hunter! Oh, oh! then 'twas on this plan that you parted with me on the road, standing like a finger post, "you walk up that way, and I must walk down this." [*Mimicks.*] Why, Dick, I did'nt know you were half so capital a rogue.

Harry. I did'nt know my forte lay that way, till persuaded by this experienced stager.

Rover. He must be an impudent old scoundrel; who is he? Do I not know him?

Harry. Why, no—I hope not. [*Aside.*

Rover. I'll step down stairs, and have the honour of—I'll kick him.

Harry. Stop! No, I wou'dn't have him hurt neither.

Rover. What's his name?

Harry. His name is—is—Abrawang.

Rover. Abrawang! Abrawang! I never heard of him; but, Dick, why would you let him persuade you to such a scandalous affair?

Harry. Why faith, I would have been off it; but when once he takes a project into his head, the devil himself can't drive him out of it.

Rover. Yes; but the constable may drive him into Winchester gaol.

Harry. Eh! your opinion of our intended exploit has made me ashamed of myself—Ha! ha! ha! Harkey, Jack, to frighten and punish my adviser, do you still keep on your character of young 'Squire Thunder—you can easily do that, as he, no more than myself, has ever seen the young gentleman.

Rover. But by Heavens I'll—"Quoit him down, Bardolph."

Harry. Yes; but, Jack, if you can marry her, her

fortune is a snug thing: besides, if you love each other—I tell you—

Rover. Hang her fortune! "My love, more noble than the world, prizes not quantity of dirty lands." Oh, Dick, she's the most lovely—she is female beauty in its genuine decoration! [*Exit*.

Harry. Ha! ha! ha! this is the drollest—Rover little suspects that I am the identical Squire Thunder that he personates—I'll lend him my character a little longer. Yes, this offers a most excellent opportunity of making my poor friend's fortune, without injuring any body; if possible, he shall have her. I can't regret the loss of charms I never knew; and, as for an estate, my father's is competent to all my wishes. Lady Amaranth, by marrying Jack Rover, will gain a man of honour, which she might miss in an earl—it may tease my father a little at first, but he's a good old fellow in the main; and, I think, when he comes to know my motive—Eh! this must be she—an elegant woman, faith! Now for a spanking lie, to continue her in the belief that Jack is the man she thinks him.

Enter LADY AMARANTH.

Lady Am. Who art thou, friend?

Harry. Madam, I've scarce time to warn you against the danger you are in, of being imposed upon by your uncle, Sir George.

Lady Am. How?

Harry. He has heard of your ladyship's partiality for his son; but is so incensed at the irregularity of his conduct, he intends, if possible, to disinherit him; and, to prevent your honouring him with your hand, had engaged, and brought me hither, to pass me on you for him, designing to treat the poor young gentleman himself as an impostor, in hopes you'll banish him your heart and house.

Lady Am. Is Sir George such a parent? I thank thee for thy caution—What is thy name!

Harry. Richard Buskin, ma'am; the stage is my profession. In the young squire's late excursion, we contracted an intimacy, and I saw so many good qualities in him, that I could not think of being the instrument of his ruin, nor deprive your ladyship of so good a husband, as I am certain he'll make you.

Lady Am. Then Sir George intends to disown him?

Harry. Yes, ma'am; I've this moment told the young gentleman of it; and he's determined, for a jest, to return the compliment by seeming to treat Sir George himself as an impostor.

Lady Am. Ha! ha! ha! 'twill be a just retaliation, indeed, what my uncle deserveth for his cruel intentions both to his son and me.

Sir Geo. [*Without.*] What, has he run away again?

Lady Am. That's mine uncle.

Harry. Yes; here's my father; and my standing out that I am not his son, will rouse him into the heat of battle, ha! ha! ha! [*Aside.*] Here he is, madam; now mind how he will dub me 'squire.

Lady Am. It's well I'm prepared, or I might have believed him.

Enter SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Well, my lady, wasn't it my wild rogue set you to all the Calcavella capers you've been cutting in the garden? You see here I have brought him into the line of battle again—you villain, why do you drop astern there? Throw a salute shot, buss her bobstays, bring to, and come down straight as a mast, you dog.

Lady Am. Uncle, who is this?

Sir Geo. Who is he! Ha! ha! ha! Gad, that's an odd question to the fellow that has been cracking your walnuts.

Lady Am. He is bad at his lesson.

Sir Geo. Certainly, when he ran from school—why don't you speak, you lubber? you're curst modest now, but before I came, 'twas all done amongst the posies—Here, my lady, take from a father's hand, Harry Thunder.

Lady Am. That is what I may not.

Sir Geo There, I thought you'd disgust her, you flat fish!

Enter ROVER.

Lady Am. [*Taking* ROVER'S *hand.*] Here, take from my hand, Harry Thunder.

Sir Geo. Eh! [*Starting at* ROVER.]

Rover. Eh! Oh! this is your sham Sir George? [*Apart.*

Harry. Yes; I've been telling the lady, and she'll seem to humour him.

Rover. I sha'n't though. [*To* HARRY.] How do you do, Abrawang!

Sir Geo. Abrawang!

Rover. You look like a good actor.—Ay, that's very well, indeed—never lose sight of your character—you know, Sir George is a noisy, turbulent, wicked old seaman—Angry! bravo!—pout your under lip, purse your brows—very well! But, dem it, Abrawang, you should have put a little red upon your nose—mind a rule, ever play an angry old man with a red nose.

Sir Geo. Nose! [*Walks about in a passion.*

Rover. Very well! that's right! strut about on your little pegs.

Sir Geo. I'm in such a fury!

Rover. We know that. Your figure is the most happy comedy squab I ever saw: why, only show yourself, and you set the audience in a roar.

Sir Geo. 'Sblood and fire!

Rover. "Keep it up, I like fun!"

Lady Am. Who is this?

[*To* SIR GEORGE, *pointing at* ROVER.

Sir Geo. Some puppy unknown.

Lady Am. And you don't know this gentleman?

[*To* ROVER, *points to* SIR GEORGE.

Rover. Excellently well; "He's a fishmonger."

Sir Geo. A what?

Lady Am. Yes, father and son are determined not to know each other. You know this youth!

[*To* ROVER.

Rover. [*To* HARRY.] "My friend Horatio."—"I wear him in my heart's core, yea, in my heart of hearts, as I do thee." [*Embracing.*

Sir Geo. Such freedom with my neice before my face! Do you know that lady, do you know my son, sir?

Rover. Be quiet. "Jaffier has discovered the plot, and you can't deceive the senate."

Harry. Yes, my conscience wou'dn't let me carry it through.

Rover. "Ay, his conscience, hanging about the neck of his heart, says good Launcelot, and good Gobbo, as aforesaid, good Launcelot Gobbo, take to thy heels, and run."

Sir Geo. Why, my lady! explain, scoundrel, and puppy unknown.

Lady Am. Uncle, I've heard thy father was kind to thee; return that kindness to thy child. If the lamb in wanton play doth fall among the waters, the shepherd taketh him out, instead of plunging him deeper, till he dieth. Though thy hairs now be grey, I'm told they were once flaxen; in short, he is too old in folly, who cannot excuse it in youth. [*Exit.*

Sir Geo. I'm an old fool! Well, that's damn'd civil of you, madam niece, and I'm a grey shepherd,—with her visions, and her vines, and her lambs in a ditch; but as for you, young Mr. Goat, I'll butt you——

Rover. My dear Abrawang, give up the game—her ladyship, in seeming to take you for her uncle, has been only humming you! What the devil, don't you think the fine creature knows her own true-born uncle?

Sir Geo. Certainly; to be sure she knows me.

Rover. Will you have done? Zounds, man, my honoured father was here himself to-day.—Her ladyship knows his person.

Sir Geo. Your honoured father! and who's your honoured self?

Rover. "Now by my father's son, and that's myself, it shall be sun, moon, or Cheshire cheese—before I budge—still crossed and crossed."

Sir Geo. What do you bawl out to me of a Cheshire cheese, I say—

Rover. "And I say, as the saying is"—your friend Dick has told me all; but to convince you of my forgiveness, in our play, as you're rough and tough, I'll cast you Charles the Wrestler, I do Orlando; I'll kick up your heels before the whole court.

Sir Geo. Why, dam'me, I'll—And you, you undutiful chick of an old pelican—

[*Lifting up his cane to strike* HARRY.

Enter JOHN, *who receives the blow.*

John. What are you at here? cudgelling the people about? But, Mr. Buckskin, I've a word to say to you in private.

Sir Geo. Buckskin; take that. [*Beats him.*

Enter LAMP, TRAP, *and two female* SERVANTS.

Lamp. "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women"——

Sir Geo. The men are rogues, and the women hussies—I'll make a clear stage.

[*Beats them off—amongst the rest, strikes* ROVER.

Rover. "A blow! Essex, a blow!"—An old rascally impostor stigmatizing me with a blow—no, I must not put up with it.—Zounds! I shall be tweaked by the nose all round the country—I'll follow him. —"Strike me! so may this arm dash him to the earth, like a dead dog despised—blindness and leprosy, lameness and lunacy, pride, shame, and the name of villain light on me, if I don't" bang—Mr. Abrawang. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Another Apartment.

Enter LADY AMARANTH *and* BANKS.

Banks. Madam, I could have paid the rent of my little cottage, but I dare say 'twas without your ladyship's knowledge, that your steward has turned me out, and put my neighbour in possession.

Lady Am. My steward oppress the poor! I did not know it indeed.

Banks. The pangs of adversity I could bear; but the innocent partner of my misfortunes, my unhappy sister—

Lady Am. I did desire Ephraim to send for thy sister—Did she dwell with thee, and both now without a home? Let her come to mine.

Banks. The hand of misery hath struck us beneath your notice.

Lady Am. Thou dost mistake—To need my assistance is the highest claim to my attention: let me see her. [*Exit* BANKS.] I could chide myself that these pastimes have turned my eye from the house of woe. Ah! think, ye proud and happy affluent, how many, in your dancing moments, pine in want, drink the salt tear; their morsel, the bread of misery, and shrinking from the cold blast into their cheerless hovels!

Enter BANKS, *leading in* AMELIA.

Banks. Madam, my sister. [*Bows and retires.*

Lady Am. Thou art welcome—I feel myself interested in thy concerns.

Amelia. Madam!

Lady Am. I judge, thou wert not always unhappy.—Tell me thy condition, then I shall better know how to serve thee. Is thy brother thy sole kindred?

Amelia. I had a husband and a son.

Lady Am. A widow! If it recall not images thou wouldst forget, impart to me thy story—'Tis rumoured in the village, thy brother is a clergyman—tell me.

Amelia. Madam, he was; but he has lost his early patron, and is now poor and unbeneficed.

Lady Am. But thy husband—

Amelia. By this brother's advice, now twenty years since, I was prevailed on to listen to the addresses of a young sea officer, (for my brother has been a chaplain in the navy) but to our surprise and mortification, we discovered, by the honesty of a sailor, in whom he put confidence, that the captain's design was only to decoy me into a seeming marriage: he ordered him to procure a counterfeit clergyman; our humble friend, instead of us, put the deceit upon his master, by concealing from him that my brother was in orders; he, flattered with the hopes of procuring me an establishment, gave into the supposed imposture, and performed the ceremony.

Lady Am. Duplicity, even with a good intent, is ill.

Amelia. Madam, the event has justified your censure; for my husband, not knowing himself really bound by any legal tie, abandoned me—I followed him to the Indies, distracted, still seeking him—I left my infant at one of our settlements; but, after a fruitless pursuit, on my return, I found the friend, to whose care I had committed my child, was compelled to retire from the ravages of war, but where I could not learn. Rent with agonizing pangs, now without child or husband, I again saw England, and my brother; who, wounded with remorse, for being the cause of my misfortunes, secluded himself from the joys of social life, and invited me to partake the comforts of solitude in that humble asylum, from whence we've both just now been driven.

Lady Am. My pity can do thee no good, yet I pity thee; but as resignation to what must be may restore peace, if my means can procure thee comfort, they are at thy pleasure. Come, let thy griefs subside; instead of thy cottage, accept, thou and thy brother, every convenience that my mansion can afford.

Amelia. Madam, I can only thank you with——

[*Weeps.*

Lady Am. My thanks are here—Come, thou shalt be cheerful. I will introduce thee to my sprightly cousin Harry, and his father, my humourous uncle; we have delights going forward that may amuse thee.

Amelia. Kind lady!

Lady Am. Come, smile—though a quaker, thou seest I am merry—the sweetest joy of wealth and power is to cheer another's drooping heart, and wipe from the pallid cheek the tear of sorrow. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Road.

Enter THREE RUFFIANS, *dressed as* SAILORS.

1*st Ruff.* Well, now, what's to be done?

2*nd Ruff.* Why, we've been long upon our shifts, and after all our tricks, twists, and turns, as London was then too hot for us, our tramp to Portsmouth was a hit.

3*rd Ruff.* Ay, but since the cash we touched, upon pretending to be able-bodied seamen, is now come to the last shilling, as we have deserted, means of a fresh supply, to take us back to London, must be thought on.

2*nd Ruff.* Ay, how to recruit the pocket without hazarding the neck.

1*st Ruff.* By an advertisement posted on the stocks yonder, there are collectors upon this road; thirty guineas are offered by the quaker lady, owner of the estate round here; I wish we could snap any straggler to bring before her. A quaker will only require a yea for an oath—we might sack these thirty guineas.

2*nd Ruff.* Yes, but we must take care; if we fall into the hands of this gentleman that's in pursuit of us—'Sdeath, isn't that his man, the old boatswain?

1*st Ruff.* Don't run, I think we three are a match for him.

2nd Ruff. Instantly put on your characters of sailors; we may get something out of him; a pitiful story makes such an impression on the soft heart of a true tar, that he'll open his hard hand, and drop you his last guinea—If we can but make him believe we were pressed, we have him; only mind me.

Enter JOHN DORY.

John. To rattle my lantern, Sir George's temper now always blows a hurricane.

2nd Ruff. What cheer? [*To* JOHN.

John. Ha hoy!

3rd Ruff. Bob, up with your speaking trumpet.

2nd Ruff. Do you see, brother, this is the thing—

Enter SIR GEORGE, *at the back, unperceived.*

Sir Geo. If these should be my deserters. [*Aside.*

1st Ruff. We three hands, just come home after a long voyage, were pressed in the river, and without letting us see our friends, brought round to Portsmouth, and there we entered freely, 'cause why?—we had no choice; then we run. We hear some gentleman is in chase of us, so, as the shot are all out, we'll surrender.

John. Surrender! Oh then you've no shot left indeed—let's see. [*Feels his pocket.*] I hav'n't the loading of a gun about me now, and this same monsieur Poverty is a bitter bad enemy.

Sir Geo. They are the deserters that I have been after! [*Aside.*

John. Meet me in an hour's time in the little wood yonder; I'll raise a wind to blow you into safe latitude—keep out to sea, my master's the rock you'll certainly split upon.

2nd Ruff. This is the first time we ever saw you;

but we'll steer by your chart, for I never knew one seaman to betray another. [*Exeunt* RUFFIANS.

Sir Geo. Then they have been pressed—I can't blame them so much for running away.

John. Yes, Sir George would certainly hang them.

Sir Geo. I wou'dn't, they shall eat beef, and drink the king's health—run and tell them so—stop, I'll tell them myself.

John. Why, now you are yourself, and a kind, good gentleman, as you used to be.

Sir Geo. Since these idle rogues are inclined to return to their duty, they sha'n't want sea store—take them this money—but hold—I'll meet them myself, and advise them as I would my children.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

A Wood.

Enter ROVER, *in his first clothes, greatly agitated, with pistols.*

Rover. Which way did Mr. Abrawang take? Dick Buskin, I think has no suspicion of my intentions:—such a choleric spark will fight, I dare say. If I fall, or even survive this affair, I leave the field of love, and the fair prize, to the young gentleman I've personated, for I'm determined to see Lady Amaranth no more—Oh, here comes Abrawang.

Enter SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Now to relieve these foolish seagulls—they must be hovering about this coast—Ha! puppy unknown!—

Rover. You're the very man I was seeking.—You are not ignorant, Mr. Abrawang—

Sir Geo. Mr. what?

Rover. You will not resign your title, ha! ha! ha! Oh, very well, I'll indulge you,—*Sir George Thunder*, you honoured me with a blow.

Sir Geo. Did it hurt you?

Rover. 'Sdeath! but let me proceed like a gentleman; as it's my pride to reject even favours, no man shall offer me an injury.

Sir Geo. Eh!

Rover. In rank we're equal.

Sir Geo. Are we faith? [*Smiling.*] The English of all this is, we're to fight.

Rover. Sir, you've marked on me an indelible stain, only to be washed out by blood.

Sir Geo. Why, I've only one objection to fighting you.

Rover. What's that, sir?

Sir Geo. That you're too brave a lad to be killed.

Rover. Brave! No, sir; at present I wear the stigma of a coward.

Sir Geo. Zounds! I like a bit of fighting—hav'n't had a morsel a long time—don't know when I've smelt gunpowder—but to bring down a woodcock.

Rover. Take your ground.

Sir Geo. But what are we to do for weapons?

Rover. Here are weapons.

Sir Geo. Well, this is bold work, for a privateer to give battle to a king's ship!

Rover. Try your charge, sir, and take your ground.

Sir Geo. I would not wish to sink, burn, or destroy what I think was built for good service; but, damme, if I don't wing you, to teach you better manners.

Enter the THREE RUFFIANS, *not perceiving* ROVER.

3rd Ruff. Ay, here's the honest fellow has brought us some cash. [*Looking at* SIR GEORGE.

2nd Ruff. We're betray'd, it's the very gentleman

that's in pursuit of us, and this promise was onl
decoy to throw us into his power—The pistol!

[*Apart, and pointing to it.*—SIR GEORGE *re*
ming the charge.

[2*nd* RUFFIAN *seizes and wrenches the piece fr*
SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Ah, boys!

2*nd Ruff.* You'd have our lives, now we'll h
yours.

[*Presents the piece at* SIR GEORGE; ROVER
vances quick, and knocks it out of his ha
[*They run*

Rover. Rascals! [*Pursues th*

Sir Geo. [*Takes up the other piece.*] My br
lad! I'll—— [*Goi*

Enter JOHN DORY.

John. No, you sha'n't. [*Holding h*

Sir Geo. The rogues will—

John. Never mind the rogues—

[*Noise of fighting without—a piece let*

Sir Geo. 'Sblood! Must I see my preserver
rish! [*Struggli*

John. Well, I know I'm your preserver, and I
perish, but I'll bring you out of harm's way.
[*Still holding h*

Sir Geo. Though he'd fight me himself—

John. Sure, we all know you'd fight the devil.

Sir Geo. He saved my life.

John. I'll save your life. [*Whips him up in*
arms.] So hey! haul up, my noble little crab walk
[*E*

SCENE III.

A Room in BANKS'S *Cottage.*

Enter FARMER GAMMON, BANKS, *and* SIM,—SIM *writing, and crying.*

F. Gam. Boy, go on with the inventory.

Sim. How unlucky! Feyther to lay hold of me, when I wanted to practise my part. [*Aside.*

Banks. This proceeding is very severe, to lay an execution on my wretched trifling goods when I thought—

F. Gam. Ay, you know you've gone up to the big house with your complaint—her ladyship's steward, to be sure, has made me give back your cottage and farm, but your goods I seize for my rent.

Banks. Only leave me a very few necessaries—by the goodness of my neighbours, I may soon redeem what the law has put into your hands.

F. Gam. The affair is now in my lawyer's hands, and plaintiff and defendant chattering about it is all smoke.

Sim. Feyther, don't be so cruel to Mr. Banks.

F. Gam. I'll mark what I may want to keep for myself. Stay here, and see that not a pin's worth be removed without my knowledge. [*To* SIM.

[*Exit.*

Sim. I'll be dom'd, if I'll be your watchdog, to bite the poor, that I won't. Mr. Banks, as feyther intends to put up your goods at auction, if you could but get a friend to buy the choice of them for you again. Sister Jane has got steward to advance her a quarter's wages, and when I've gone to sell corn for feyther, besides presents, I've made a market penny

now and then. Here—it's not much! but every little helps.

[*Takes out a small leather purse, and offers it to* BANKS.

Banks. I thank you, my good-natured boy; but keep your money.

Sim. Last summer you saved me from being drowned in Black Pool; if you'll not take this, ecod, in there I'll directly fling it, and let old Nick save it from being drowned, an' he can. [*Going.*

Banks. My kind lad, then I'll not hurt your feeling, by opposing your liberality. [*Takes it.*

Sim. He! he! he! you've now given my heart such a pleasure as I never felt, nor I'm sure feyther afore me.

Banks. But, Sim, whatever may be his opinion of worldly prudence, still remember he's your parent.

Sim. I will—"One elbow chair, one claw table."

[*Exit, writing, and* BANKS.

Enter AMELIA.

Amelia. The confusion into which Lady Amaranth's family is thrown by the sudden departure, and apprehended danger of her young cousin, must have prevented her ladyship from giving that attention to our affairs, that I'm sure was her inclination. If I can but prevail on my brother too, to accept her protection—I can't enjoy the delights of her ladyship's hospitable mansion, and leave him here still subject to the insults of his churlish neighbours—Heavens! who's this? [*Retires.*

Enter ROVER *hastily, his hair and dress much disordered.*

Rover. What a race! [*Panting.*] I've at last got from the blood-hounds! Ah, if old Abrawang had but

followed and backed me, we'd have tickled their catastrophes; but when they got me alone, three upon me were odds, so safe's the word—whose house is this I've dash'd into?—Eh! the friendly cottage of my old gentleman! Are you at home! [*Calls.*] Gadso! I had a hard struggle for it; yes, murder was their intent, so it was well for me that I was born without brains. I'm quite weak, faint! [*Leans against the wall.*

Amelia. [*Advancing.*] Sir, an't you well? [*With concern.*]

Rover. Madam, I ask pardon—hem, yes, ma'am, very well, I thank you—now exceeding well—got into a fray there, in a kind of a hobble with some worthy gentlemen, only simple, honest farmers. I fancy mistook me for a sheaf of barley, for they down with me, and then thrash'd so heartily, gad, their flails flew merrily about my ears, but I up, and when I could no longer fight like a mastiff, why, I—run like a greyhound—But, dear ma'am, excuse me. Egad, this is very rude, 'faith.

Amelia. You seem disturbed, [*With emotion.*] will you take any refreshment?

Rover. Madam, you're very good.—Only a little of your currant wine, if you please; if I don't forget, it stands—just—[*Points*—AMELIA *brings some from a beaufet.*] Madam, I've the honour of drinking your health. [*Drinks.*

Amelia. I hope you're not hurt, sir?

Rover. "A little better, but very weak still"—I had a sample of this before, and I liked it so much, that, madam—"Won't you take another?"

Amelia. Sir!

Rover. Madam, if you'd been fighting, as I have, you'd—well, well, [*Fills and drinks.*] now I'm as well as any man—"In Illyria," got a few hard knocks though.

Amelia. You'd better repose a little, you seem'd much disordered coming in.

Rover. [*Places a chair, and both sit.*] Why ma'am, you must know thus it was—

Enter SHERIFF'S OFFICER.

Off. Come, ma'am, Mr. Gammon says this chair is wanted to make up the half dozen above. [*Lays hold of* AMELIA'S *chair, she rises terrified.*

Rover. What, what's all this?

Off. Why the furniture's seized on execution, and a man must to his duty.

Rover. Then, scoundrel, know, that a man's first duty is civility and tenderness to a woman.

Amelia. Heavens! where's my brother? This gentleman will bring himself into trouble.

Off. Master, d'ye see, I'm representative for his honour the High Sheriff.

Rover. Every High Sheriff should be a gentleman, and when he's represented by a rascal, he's dishonour'd.—Dem it, I might as well live about Covent-Garden, and every night get beating the watch; for here, among groves and meadows, I'm always squabbling with constables. [*Whips up a stick from a corner of the room, and holds it behind him.*

Off. Come, come, I must—

Rover. "As you say, sir, last Wednesday, so it was"—Sir, your most obedient, humble servant—[*Bows respectfully.*] Pray, sir, may I take the liberty to know, have you ever been astonished? [*With great ceremony.*

Off. What?

Rover. Because, sir, I intend to astonish you; my dear fellow, give me your hand. [*Takes his hand, and beats him.*]—Now, sir, you are astonished?

Off. Yes; but see if I don't suit you with an action.

Rover. "Right, suit the action to the word, the word to the action;" "See if the gentlewoman be not affrighted"—"Michael, I'll make thee an example."

Off. Yes, fine example, when goods are seized here by the law, and—

Rover. "Thou worm and maggot of the law!" "Hop me over every kennel, or you shall hop without my custom."

Off. I don't value your custom.

Rover. You are astonished, now I'll amaze you.

Off. No, sir, I won't be amazed—but only see if I don't—

Rover. Hop! [*Exit* OFFICER, *muttering and bullying, yet frightened.*] Stop, ma'am, these sort of gentry are monstrous bad company for a lady—So I'll just see him to the door, and then I'll see him outside the door.—Ma'am, I'm your most obedient humble servant. [*Bows respectfully, and exit hastily.*

Amelia. I feel a strange curiosity to know who this young gentleman is. I find my heart interested, I can't account for—he must have known the house, by the freedom—but then his gaiety, (without familiar rudeness) native elegance of manners, and good-breeding, seem to make him at home any where.—My brother, I think, must know—

Enter BANKS *hastily, and agitated.*

Banks. Amelia, did you see the young gentleman that was here? Some ruffian fellows, and a posse of the country people, have bound and dragged him from the door, on the allegation of three men, who mean to swear he has robbed them; and they have taken him to Lady Amaranth's.

Amelia. How! He did enter here in confusion, as if pursued; but I'll stake my life on his innocence. I'll speak to lady Amaranth, and in spite of calumny, he shall have justice—he would not let me be insulted, because he saw me an unprotected woman, without a husband or a son, and shall he want an advocate? Brother, come. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.

LADY AMARANTH'S.

Enter JANE, *with a light.*

Jane. I believe there's not a soul in the house but myself; my lady has sent all the folks round the country to search after the young 'squire, she'll certainly break her heart if any thing happens to him; I don't wonder, for surely he's a dear sweet gentleman: the pity of it is, his going spoils all our fine play, and I had just got my part quite by heart; however, I must do the room up for Mr. Banks's sister, that my lady has invited here. [*Adjusts her toilet.*

Enter EPHRAIM SMOOTH.

Eph. The man John Dory has carried the man George hither in his arms, and has locked him up. Coming into the house, they did look to me like a blue lobster with a shrimp in his claws—Oh, here is the damsel I love, and alone.

Jane. They say when folks look in the glass, at night, they see the black gentleman.

[*As she is looking in the glass,* EPHRAIM *goes and peeps over her shoulder; she screams.*

Eph. Thou art employed in vanity.

Jane. Well, who wants you?

Eph. It is natural for woman to love man.

Jane. Yes; but not such ugly men as you are. Why would you come in to frighten me, when you know there's nobody here but ourselves?

Eph. I am glad of that. I am the elm and thou the honeysuckle; let thy arms entwine me.

Jane. Oh, what a rogue is here! but yonder comes

my lady, and I'll show him off to her in his true colours. [*Aside.*

Eph. Clasp me around.

Jane. Well, I will, if you'll take off your hat, and make me a fine low bow.

Eph. I cannot bend my knee, nor take off my beaver.

Jane. Then you're very impudent—go along.

Eph. But to win thy favour—

[*Takes off his hat, and bows.*

Jane. Now kneel down to me.

Eph. I cannot, but one lovely smile may smile me down. [*She smiles, he kneels.*

Jane. Well, now, read me a speech out of that fine play-book.

Eph. I read a play! a-bo-mi-na-ti-on!—But, Jane, wilt thou kiss me?

Jane. I kiss a man! a-bo-mi-na-ti-on! [*Mimicking.*] but you may take my hand—

Eph. Oh! 'tis a comfort to the lip of the faithful! [*Kisses her hand.*

Enter LADY AMARANTH.

Lady Am. How! [*Taps him gently on the shoulder, he looks up confounded.*] Ah, thou sly and deceitful hypocrite!

Eph. Verily, Mary, I was buffeted by Satan, in the shape of a damsel.

Lady Am. Begone!

Eph. My spirit is sad, though my feet move so nimble. [*Exit, very slowly.*

Lady Am. But, oh, Heavens! no tidings of my dearest Henry! Jane, let them renew their search.

Jane. Here's madam Amelia; you see I've got her room ready: but I'll go make brother Sim look for the young 'squire. [*Exit.*

Enter AMELIA.

Amelia. Oh, madam, might I implore your influence with—

Lady Am. Thou art ill accommodated here; but I hope thou wilt excuse—My mind is a sea of trouble, my peace shipwrecked—Oh, friend, hadst thou seen my cousin Harry, thou too, all who knew him, must be anxious for his safety.

John. [*Without.*] Heave a-head.

Enters with SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Rascal! whip me up like a pound of tea, dance me about like a young bear, make me quit the preserver of my life! yes, puppy unknown will think me a poltroon, and that I was afraid to follow, and second him.

John. Well, you may as well turn into your hammock; for out to-night you shall not budge—[*Sees* AMELIA.] Oh! marcy of Heaven! isn't it—Eh, master? Only give one look.

Amelia. [*Seeing* SIR GEORGE.] My husband!

[*Swoons;* LADY AMARANTH *supports her.*

Sir Geo. 'Tis my Amelia!

John. [*Stopping* SIR GEORGE, *and looking attentively at* AMELIA.] Reef the foresail! first, you cracked her heart by sheering off, and now you'll overset her by bringing to.

Lady Am. Hold—soft!

Amelia. Are you at length returned to me, my Seymour?

Lady Am. Seymour! her mind is disturbed; this is mine uncle, Sir George Thunder.

John. No, no, my lady, she knows what she's saying very well.

Sir Geo. Niece, I have been a villain to this lady, I confess. But, my dear Amelia, Providence has

done you justice in part. From the first month I quitted you, I have never entered one happy hour on my journal; hearing that you had foundered, and considering myself the cause, the worm of remorse has gnawed my timbers.

Amelia. You're not still offended with me?

Sir Geo. Me! can you forgive my offence, and condescend to take my hand as an atonement?

Amelia. Your hand! Do you forget that we are already married?

Sir Geo. Ay, there was my rascality.

John. You may say that.

Sir Geo. Hold your tongue, you impudent crimp, you pander, you bad adviser—I'll strike my false colours—I'll now acknowledge the chaplain you provided was—

John. Was a good man, and a greater honour to his black, than your honour has been to your blue, cloth—Eh, by the word of a seaman, here he is himself.

Enter BANKS.

Sir Geo. Your brother!

Banks. Captain Seymour! have I found you, sir?

Sir Geo. My dear Banks, I'll make every reparation.—Amelia shall really be my wife.

Banks. That, sir, my sister is already; for when I performed the marriage ceremony, which you took only as the cloke of your deception, I was actually in orders.

John. Now, who's the crimp, and the pander? I never told you this since; because I thought a man's own reflections were the best punishment for betraying an innocent woman.

Lady Am. Madam, my inmost soul partaketh of thy gladness, and joy for thy reformation. [*To* SIR GEORGE.] But thy prior marriage to this lady, annuls the subsequent, and my cousin Harry is not now thy heir.

Sir Geo. So much the better, he's an unnatural cub; but, Amelia, I flatter myself I have an heir, my infant boy—

Amelia. Ah, husband, you had; but—

Sir Geo. Gone! well, well, I see I have been a miserable scoundrel—Eh, I will, yes, I'll adopt that brave, kind lad, that wou'dn't let any body kill me but himself. He shall have my estate, that's my own acquisition—My lady, marry him, puppy unknown's a fine fellow! Amelia, only for him, you'd never have found your husband Captain Seymour in Sir George Thunder.

Amelia. What?

Banks. Are you Sir George Thunder?

Enter LANDLORD, *followed by* EPHRAIM.

Land. Please you, madam, they've got a footpad in custody.

Eph. I am come to sit in judgment, for there is a bad man in thy house, Mary. Bring him before me.

Sir Geo. Before you, old Squintibus? And perhaps you don't know I'm a magistrate?

Eph. I'll examine him.

Sir Geo. You be damn'd!—I'll examine him myself. [*Shoves* EPHRAIM.] Tow him in here. I'll give him a passport to Winchester bilboes.

Amelia. [*Kneels to* SIR GEORGE.] Oh, sir, as you hope for mercy, extend it to this youth; but even should he be guilty, which, from our knowledge of his benevolent and noble nature, I think next to an impossibility, let the services he has rendered to us—he protected, relieved your forsaken wife, and her unhappy brother, in the hour of want and sorrow.

Sir Geo. What, Amelia, plead for a robber! Consider, my love, justice is above bias or partiality. If my son violated the laws of his country, I'd deliver

him up a public victim to disgrace and punishment.

Lady Am. Oh, my impartial uncle! Had thy country any laws to punish him, who, instead of paltry gold, would rob the artless virgin of her dearest treasure, in the rigid judge I should now behold the trembling criminal.

Enter TWITCH, *with* ROVER *bound, who keeps his face averted, and* TWO RUFFIANS.

Eph. [*Advances.*] Speak, thou.

Sir Geo. Hold thy clapper, thou—Who are the prosecutors?

Eph. Call in—

Sir Geo. Will nobody stop his mouth? [JOHN DORY *pushes him up against the wall.*] Where are the prosecutors.

Twitch. There, tell his worship, the justice.

2nd Ruff. A justice—Oh! the devil!—I thought we should have nothing but quakers to deal with.—[*Aside.*] Why, your honour, I'll swear—

[*In a feigned country voice.*

Sir Geo. [*Looking at them.*] Oh, ho! Clap down the hatches—secure these sharks.

Rover. I thought I should find you here, Abrawang, and that you had some knowledge of these fellows.

Lady Am. Heavens! my cousin Harry! [*Aside.*

Sir Geo. The devil! is'nt this my spear and shield?

John. [*Advances.*] My young master—Oh! what have you been at here? [*Unbinds* ROVER.

Enter HARRY.

Harry. My dear fellow, are you safe?

Rover. Yes, Dick, I was brought in here very safe, I assure you.

Harry. A confederate in custody below has made a confession of their villainy; that they concerted this plan to accuse him of a robbery; first, for revenge, then, in hope to share the reward for apprehending him: he also owns they are not sailors, but depredators on the public.

Sir Geo. Keep them safe in limbo. [RUFFIANS *taken off.*]—Not knowing that the justice of peace, whom they've brought the lad now here before, is the very man they attacked!—Ha! ha! ha!—The rogues have fallen into their own snare.

Rover. What, now you're a justice of peace; well said, Abrawang!

Amelia. Then, Sir George, you know him too?

Sir Geo. Know puppy unknown! to be sure.

Rover. Madam, I am happy to see you again. [*To* AMELIA.]—Ah, how do you do, my kind host?

[*Shakes hands with* BANKS.

Lady Am. I rejoice at thy safety.—Be reconciled to him. [*To* SIR GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Reconciled!—if I don't love, respect, and honour him, I should be unworthy of the life he rescued. But who is he?

Harry. Sir, he is—

Rover. Dick, I thank you for your good wishes; but I am still determined not to impose on this lady. Madam, as I at first told this well-meaning tar, when he forced me to your house, I am not the son of Sir George Thunder.

John. No! Then I wish you were the son of an admiral, and I your father.

Harry. You refuse the lady? To punish you, I've a mind to take her myself.—My dear cousin—

Rover. Stop, Dick.—If I, who adore her, won't, you shall not. No, no; madam, never mind what this fellow says, he's as poor as myself—Isn't he, Abrawang?

Harry. Then, my dear Rover, since you are so obstinately disinterested, I'll no longer tease my father, whom you here see, and in your strolling friend, his very truant Harry, that ran from Portsmouth school, and join'd you and your fellow comedians.

Rover. Indeed!

Harry. Dear cousin, forgive me, if, through my zeal for the happiness of my friend, I endeavoured to promote yours, by giving you a husband more worthy than myself. [*To* LADY AMARANTH.

Rover. Am I to believe! Madam, is your uncle, Sir George Thunder, in this room?

Lady Am. He is.— [*Looking at* SIR GEORGE.

Rover. 'Tis so! You, in reality, what I've had the impudence to assume! and have perplexed your father with my ridiculous effrontery.—[*Turns to* JOHN DORY, *angry*.] I told you, I insisted I wasn't the person you took me for, but you must bring your damn'd chariot! I am ashamed and mortified. Madam, I beg to take my leave.

Eph. Thou art welcome to go.

Rover. [*Bows*.] Sir George, as the father of my friend, I cannot lift my hand against you; but I hope, sir, you'll apoligize to me? [*Apart*.

Sir Geo. Ay, with pleasure, my noble splinter—now tell me from what dock you were launched, my heart of oak.

Rover. I've heard, in England, sir; but from my earliest knowledge, till within a very few years, I've been in the East Indies.

Sir Geo. Beyond seas? Well, and how?

Rover. It seems, I was committed an infant to the care of a lady, who was herself obliged, by the *gentle* Hyder Ally, to strike her toilet, and decamp without beat of drum, leaving me, a chubby little fellow, squatted on a carpet. A serjeant's wife alone returned, and snatched me off triumphant, through fire, smoke, cannon, cries, and carnage.

Lady Am. Dost thou mark? [*To* AMELIA.

Amelia. Sir, can you recollect the name of the town where—

Rover. Yes, ma'am, the town of Negapatnam.

Amelia. I thank you, sir.

[*Gazes with delight and earnestness on* ROVER.

Rover. An officer, who'd much rather act Hotspur on the stage, than in the field, brought me up behind the scenes at the Calcutta theatre—I was rolled on the boards, acted myself into the favour of a colonel—promised a pair of colours; but, impatient to find my parents, hid myself in the steerage of an homeward-bound ship; assumed the name of Rover, from the uncertainty of my fate; and having murdered more poets than Rajahs, stept on English ground, unencumbered with rupees or pagodas.—Ha! ha! —Wou'd'st thou come home so, little Ephraim?

Eph. I would bring myself home with some money.

Amelia. Excuse my curiosity, sir; what was the lady's name in whose care you were left?

Rover. Oh, ma'am, she was the lady of a Major Linstock; but I heard my mother's name was Seymour.

Sir Geo. Why, Amelia?

Amelia. My son!

Rover. Madam!

Amelia. It is my Charles! [*Embraces him.*

Sir Geo. Eh!

John. [*Sings and capers, claps* EPHRAIM *on the shoulders.*] Tol, lol, lol! Though I never heard it before, my heart told me he was a chip of the old block.

Amelia. Your father!

[*To* ROVER, *pointing to* SIR GEORGE.

Rover. Can it?—Heaven! then have I attempted to raise my impious hand against a parent's life!

Sir Geo. My dear brave boy! Then have I a son

with spirit to fight me as a stranger, yet defend me as a father.

Lady Am. [*Takes him by the hand.*] Uncle, you'll recollect 'twas I, who first introduced a son to thee.

Sir Geo. And I hope you will next introduce a grandson to me, young slyboots. Harry, you've lost your fortune.

Harry. Yes, sir, but I've gained a brother, whose friendship (before I knew him to be such,) I prized above the first fortune in England.

Rover. My generous friend—My dearest Rosalind!

Amelia. Then, will you take our Charles?

[*To* LADY AMARANTH.

Lady Am. Yea, but only on condition thou bestowest thy fortune on his friend and brother; mine is sufficient for us, is it not?

Rover. Angelic creature!—to think of my generous friend—But now for "As you like it." Where's Lamp and Trap?—I shall ever love a play—a spark from Shakspeare's Muse of Fire was the star that guided me through my desolate and bewildered maze of life, and brought me to these unexpected blessings.

To merit friends so good, so sweet a wife,
The Tender Husband be my part for life;
My Wild Oats sown, let candid Thespian laws
Decree that glorious harvest—your applause.

THE END.

Painted by Singleton *Published by Longman & Co March 1816.* *Engraved b*

THE

BEGGAR'S OPERA;

IN THREE ACTS;

BY JOHN GAY.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

INTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD

LONDON:

INTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

REMARKS.

The celebrated author of this celebrated opera was born to experience variety of fortune; such as plunged him into the bitterest despondency, and such as elevated him to the height of joy.

John Gay was born near Barnstaple, in Devonshire, 1688, and received his education at the grammar school there. He was of an ancient family, and yet was bred a mercer: but having a small independent fortune, and a mind superior to the state in which his relations had placed him, he purchased his freedom from the indentures, which bound him to a shopkeeper, in the Strand, and quitted the counter, where he had attended for several years.

His first production, a poem, called "Rural Sports," printed in 1711, and dedicated to Pope, gained him the acquaintance and friendship of that poet, and introduced him to many other distinguished persons.

The year following, he was made secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth; and soon after accompanied Lord Clarendon, in the same capacity, to Hanover.

Gay seems to have fixed his inclination upon a certain possession, which poets, of all other classes of men, appear most to have despised—money.

With the various earnings of his pen, both as secretary and author, poor Gay, in search of riches, placed all he had accumulated in the bank of the famous South Sea company.—His warmest wishes were soon accomplished, and his little fortune became treble.—He was advised to sell out, and purchase an annuity with his increased store—he waited to have it still augment,—and lost every guinea he was worth in the world.

The poet had neither wife nor child to share in this severe misfortune, and yet it seemed to have struck to his heart.

He was, for a time, inconsolable,—almost driven to despair. But the treasure he still possessed in affectionate and enlightened friends, who sought every method to dissipate his care, at length prevailed; and he began, once more, to write for money, and to save it.

He now produced his tragedy of "The Captives"—had the honour of reading it to the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline; and the greater honour of receiving her royal command to write a book of Fables, which was dedicated, by permission, to the young Duke of Cumberland, and most graciously accepted.

Gay's hopes were again elated; he looked forward to advancement from so powerful and liberal a patronage;—but in 1727, when this princess ascended the throne, another South Sea bubble broke, and he was offered a place at court, which he conceived it an indignity to suppose he would accept.

He refused to be gentleman-usher to one of the young princesses, as an office, in which his peculiar talents would be wholly useless; but though he considered that insult had been here added to disappointment, yet, as this misfortune occurred without any imprudence or fault of his own, he sunk not under its weight, as when he lost his fortune, in the pursuit of increasing it;—but, irritated by a manly pride against courts and courtiers, was now inspired to compose this admirable drama of "The Beggar's Opera."

It came out in the season of 1727-8—and on this occasion the author experienced a joy, equal in its excess to any of his past and bitterest sorrows.

Never had dramatic work been so attractive; and, as the nature of the entertainment was wholly new to an English audience, the author had eulogiums for his invention, beyond the common share allotted to successful authors.

"The Beggar's Opera" was acted sixty-three nights without intermission, and charmed every auditor, except those who were the objects of its satire. Anecdotes, almost incredible, are related of its popularity on its first coming forth; and yet their truth can be easily conceived, when the present force of this excellent work is recollected. At this period, when English operas are no longer a novelty, and some very good ones have appeared, still no entertainment of the kind is allowed to hold an exact equality with this production. At such high estimation, a certain discount, is, however, taken from

its value. It fails of moral precept.—Nor is that accusation all; it has the fatal tendency to make vice alluring. The skill of the author is here supremely excellent, though it is grievous he did not show it in a better cause; for who, but Gay, could have made highwaymen, thieves, and cheats of every denomination, endearing to the delicate, the elegant, and even the honourable spectator;

Still it is to be observed, that the author has rendered the only honest person in the play by far the most interesting character. Polly Peachum is endowed with such superior charms, from the unoffending qualities she possesses, that when she was first represented, every actress who performed the part made her fortune by marriage;—and Miss Fenton, the original Polly, so fascinated the Duke of Bolton, that he elevated her to the highest rank of a female subject, by making her his wife.

It is painful to state, that, after this brilliant success, Gay wrote again, and his drama failed of a kind reception. It seems a paradox, yet it is true, that the author who has once written well should write no more; whilst he who is unsuccessful had best proceed.—The first may lose a reputation by perseverance, and the last may regain one.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.	COVENT-
CAPTAIN MACHEATH	*Mr. Kelly.*	*Mr. In*
PEACHUM	*Mr. Dowton.*	*Mr. M*
LOCKIT	*Mr. Wewitzer.*	*Mr. E*
MAT O' THE MINT	*Mr. Cooke.*	*Mr. T*
BEN BUDGE	*Mr. Maddocks.*	*Mr. F*
CROOK-FINGER'D JACK	*Mr. Chatterly.*	*Mr. J*
JEMMY TWITCHER	*Mr. Rhodes.*	*Mr. T*
WAT DREARY	*Mr. Evans.*	*Mr. St*
NIMMING NED	*Mr. Tokely.*	*Mr. A*
HARRY PADDINGTON	*Mr. Webb.*	*Mr. K*
ROBIN OF BAGSHOT	*Mr. Fisher.*	*Mr. W*
DRAWER		*Mr. W.*
FILCH	*Mr. Suett.*	*Mr. Si*
MRS. PEACHUM	*Mrs. Sparks.*	*Mrs. D*
POLLY	*Mrs. Mountain.*	*Mrs. D*
LUCY	*Miss De Camp.*	*Mrs. C.*
MRS. COAXER	*Mrs. Jones.*	*Mrs. B*
DOLLY TRULL	*Miss Watson.*	*Mrs. G*
MRS. VIXEN	*Miss Saunders.*	*Miss C*
BETTY DOXY	*Mrs. Butler.*	*Mrs. I*
JENNY DIVER	*Mrs. Gardner.*	*Miss C*
MRS. SLAMMEKIN	*Miss Tidswell.*	*Miss I*
SUKEY TAWDRY	*Miss Menage.*	*Mrs. W*
MOLLY BRAZEN	*Mrs. Coates.*	*Mrs. I.*
DIANA TRAPES	*Mrs. Maddocks.*	

THE

BEGGAR'S OPERA.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

PEACHUM'S *House.*

PEACHUM *sitting at a Table, with a large Book of Accounts before him.*

AIR—PEACHUM.

"An old woman, clothed in grey."

Through all the employments of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother:
Whore and rogue they call husband and wife;
All professions be-rogue one another.
The priest calls the lawyer a cheat;
The lawyer be-knaves the divine;
And the statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his trade is as honest as mine.

A lawyer is an honest employment, so is mine. Like me too, he acts in a double capacity, both against

rogues, and for them; for 'tis but fitting that we should protect and encourage cheats, since we live by them.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Sir, Black Moll has sent word, her trial comes on in the afternoon, and she hopes you will order matters so as to bring her off.

Peach. Why, as the wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her that I'll soften the evidence.

Filch. Tom Gagg, sir, is found guilty.

Peach. A lazy dog! When I took him, the time before, I told him what he would come to, if he did not mend his hand. This is death, without reprieve — I may venture to book him; [*writes*] for Tom Gagg — forty pounds. Let Betty Sly know, that I'll save her from transportation, for I can get more by her staying in England.

Filch. Betty hath brought more goods to our lock this year than any five of the gang; and, in truth, 'tis pity to lose so good a customer.

Peach. If none of the gang takes her off, she may, in the common course of business, live a twelve-month longer. I love to let women 'scape. A good sportsman always lets the hen-partridges fly, because the breed of the game depends upon them. Besides, here the law allows us no reward: there is nothing to be got by the death of women—except our wives.

Filch. Without dispute, she is a fine woman! 'Twas to her I was obliged for my education. To say a bold word, she has trained up more young fellows to the business than the gaming-table.

Peach. Truly, Filch, thy observation is right. We and the surgeons are more beholden to women than all the professions besides.

AIR—FILCH.

"The bonny grey-eyed morn," &c.

'Tis woman that seduces all mankind;
By her we first were taught the wheedling arts;
Her very eyes can cheat; when most she's kind,
She tricks us of our money, with our hearts.
For her, like wolves by night, we roam for prey,
And practise every fraud to bribe her charms;
For suits of love, like law, are won by pay,
And beauty must be fee'd into our arms.

Peach. But make haste to Newgate, boy, and let my friends know what I intend; for I love to make them easy, one way or another.

Filch. When a gentleman is long kept in suspense, penitence may break his spirit ever after. Besides, certainty gives a man a good air upon his trial, and makes him risk another, without fear or scruple. But I'll away, for 'tis a pleasure to be a messenger of comfort to friends in affliction. [*Exit.*

Peach. But it is now high time to look about me for a decent execution against next sessions. I hate a lazy rogue, by whom one can get nothing till he is hanged. A register of the gang, [*reading*] *Crook-finger'd Jack—a year and a half in the service*——let me see, how much the stock owes to his industry:—One, two, three, four, five gold watches, and seven silver ones. A mighty clean-handed fellow! sixteen snuff-boxes, five of them of true gold, six dozen of handkerchiefs, four silver-hilted swords, half-a-dozen of shirts, three tie-periwigs, and a piece of broad-cloth. Considering these are only the fruits of his leisure hours, I don't know a prettier fellow; for no man alive hath a more engaging presence of mind upon the road. *Wat Dreary, alias Brown Will*—an irregular dog, who hath an underhand way of dis-

posing of his goods; I'll try him only for a sessions or two longer, upon his good behaviour. *Harry Paddington*—a poor, petty-larceny rascal, without the least genius! that fellow, though he were to live these six months, will never come to the gallows with any credit.—*Slippery Sam*—he goes off the next sessions; for the villain hath the impudence to have views of following his trade as a tailor, which he calls an honest employment.—*Mat o' th' Mint*—listed not above a month ago; a promising, sturdy fellow, and diligent in his way; somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good contributions on the public, if he does not cut himself short by murder:—*Tom Tipple*—a guzzling, soaking sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand; a cart is absolutely necessary for him. *Robin of Bagshot, alias Gorgon, alias Bluff Bob, alias Carbuncle, alias Bob Booty*——

Enter MRS. PEACHUM.

Mrs. P. What of Bob Booty, husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him—You know, my dear, he's a favourite customer of mine—'twas he made me a present of this ring.

Peach. I have set his name down in the black list, that's all, my dear; he spends his life among women, and, as soon as his money is gone, one or other of the ladies will hang him for the reward, and there's forty pounds lost to us for ever!

Mrs. P. You know, my dear, I never meddle in matters of death; I always leave those affairs to you. Women, indeed, are bitter bad judges in these cases; for they are so partial to the brave, that they think every man handsome who is going to the camp or the gallows.—But, really, husband, you should not be too hard-hearted, for you never had a finer, braver set of men, than at present. We have not had a murder among them all these seven months; and truly, my dear, that is a great blessing.

Peach. What a dickens is the woman always whimpering about murder for? No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man in his own defence; and if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a gentleman do? so, my dear, have done upon this subject. Was Captain Macheath here this morning, for the bank-notes he left with you last week?

Mrs. P. Yes, my dear; and though the bank hath stopped payment, he was so cheerful, and so agreeable! Sure, there is not a finer gentleman upon the road than the captain! If he comes from Bagshot at any reasonable hour, he hath promised to make one this evening with Polly, me, and Bob Booty, at a party at quadrille. Pray, my dear, is the captain rich?

Peach. The captain keeps too good company ever to grow rich. Marybone and the chocolate-houses are his undoing. The man that proposes to get money by play should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth.

Mrs. P. Really, I am sorry, upon Polly's account, the captain hath not more discretion. What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

Peach. Upon Polly's account! what a plague doth the woman mean?—Upon Polly's account!

Mrs. P. Captain Macheath is very fond of the girl.

Peach. And what then?

Mrs. P. If I have any skill in the ways of women, I am sure Polly thinks him a very pretty man.

Peach. And what then? you would not be so mad as to have the wench marry him! Gamesters and highwaymen are, generally, very good to their whores, but they are very devils to their wives.

Mrs. P. But if Polly should be in love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself?—Poor girl, I'm in the utmost concern about her!

Peach. Look ye, wife, a handsome wench, in our way of business, is as profitable as at the bar of a Temple coffee-house, who looks upon it as her livelihood, to grant every liberty but one. My daughter to me should be like a court lady to a minister of state, a key to the whole gang. Married! if the affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the example of our neighbours.

Mrs. P. Mayhap, my dear, you may injure the poor girl: she loves to imitate the fine ladies, and she may only allow the captain liberties, in the view of interest.

Peach. But 'tis your duty, my dear, to warn the girl against her ruin, and to instruct her how to make the most of her beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the mean time, wife, rip out the coronets and marks of these dozen of cambric handkerchiefs, for I can dispose of them this afternoon to a chap in the city. [*Exit.*

Mrs. P. Never was a man more out of the way in an argument than my husband. Why must our Polly, forsooth, differ from her sex, and love only her husband? and why must Polly's marriage, contrary to all observation, make her the less followed by other men? All men are thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property.

Enter FILCH.

Mrs. P. Come hither, Filch.—I am as fond of this child as though my mind misgave me he were my own. He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble-fingered as a juggler. If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of thy life, I pronounce, boy, thou wilt be a great man in history. Where was your post last night, my boy?

Filch. I plied at the opera, madam; and, considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there was no great hurry in getting chairs and coaches,

made a tolerable hand on't—These seven handkerchiefs, madam.

Mrs. P. Coloured ones, I see. They are of sure sale from our warehouse at Redriff, among the seamen.

Filch. And this snuff-box.

Mrs. P. Set in gold! a pretty encouragement this to a young beginner!

Filch. I had a fair tug at a charming gold-watch. Pox take the tailors, for making the fobs so deep and narrow!—it stuck by the way, and I was forced to make my escape under a coach. Really, madam, I fear I shall be cut off in the flower of my youth, so that, every now and then, since I was pumped, I have thoughts of taking up, and going to sea.

Mrs. P. You should go to Hockley-in-the-Hole, and to Marybone, child, to learn valour; these are the schools that have bred so many brave men. I thought, boy, by this time, thou hadst lost fear as well as shame. Poor lad! how little does he know yet of the Old Bailey! For the first fact, I'll insure thee from being hanged; and going to sea, Filch, will come time enough, upon a sentence of transportation. But now, since you have nothing better to do, ev'n go to your book, and learn your catechism: for really a man makes but an ill figure in the ordinary's paper, who cannot give a satisfactory answer to his questions. But, hark you, my lad, don't tell me a lie; for you know I hate a liar—Do you know of any thing that hath passed between Captain Macheath and our Polly?

Filch. I beg you, madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a lie to you, or to Miss Polly; for I promised her I would not tell.

Mrs. P. But when the honour of our family is concerned.

Filch. I shall lead a sad life with Miss Polly, if ever she comes to know I told you. Besides, I

would not willingly forfeit my own honour, by betraying any body.

Mrs. P. Yonder comes my husband and Polly. Come, Filch, you shall go with me into my own room, and tell me the whole story. I'll give thee a glass of a most delicious cordial that I keep for my own drinking. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEACHUM *and* POLLY.

Polly. I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself, and of my man too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a court or at an assembly. We have it in our natures, papa. If I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favour to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common.

AIR.

"What shall I do to show how much I love her?"

Virgins are like the fair flow'r in its lustre,
Which in the garden enamels the ground,
Near it the bees in play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy butterflies frolic around;

But when once pluck'd 'tis no longer alluring,
To Covent Garden 'tis sent, (as yet sweet),
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring,
Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.

Peach. You know, Polly, I am not against your toying and trifling with a customer, in the way of business, or to get out a secret or so; but if I find out that you have played the fool, and are married, you

jade you, I'll cut your throat, hussy. Now, you know my mind.

Enter MRS. PEACHUM, *in a very great passion.*

AIR.

"O London is a fine town."

Our Polly is a sad slut! nor heeds what we have taught her;
I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter!
For she must have both hoods and gowns, and hoops to swell her pride,
With scarfs and stays, and gloves and lace, and she will have men beside;
And when she's dress'd with care and cost, all tempting, fine, and gay,
As men should serve a cucumber, she flings herself away.

You baggage! you hussy! you inconsiderate jade! had you been hanged it would not have vexed me; for that might have been your misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by choice!——The wench is married, husband.

Peach. Married! the captain is a bold man, and will risk any thing for money: to be sure he believes her a fortune. Do you think your mother and I should have lived comfortably so long together if ever we had been married, baggage?

Mrs. P. I knew she was always a proud slut, and now the wench hath played the fool and married, because, forsooth, she would do like the gentry! Can you support the expense of a husband, hussy, in gaming and drinking? have you money enough to carry on the daily quarrels of man and wife about who shall squander most? If you must be married, could you introduce nobody into our family but a highwayman? Why, thou foolish jade, thou wilt be as ill used

and as much neglected as if thou hadst married a lord!

Peach. Let not your anger, my dear, break through the rules of decency; for the captain looks upon himself, in the military capacity, as a gentleman by his profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting or of dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent chances for a wife. Tell me, hussy, are you ruined or no?

Mrs. P. With Polly's fortune she might very well have gone off to a person of distinction: yes, that you might, you pouting slut.

Peach. What! is the wench dumb? speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an answer from you. Are you really bound wife to him, or are you only upon liking? [*Pinches her.*

Polly. Oh! [*Screaming.*

Mrs. P. How the mother is to be pitied who hath handsome daughters! Locks, bolts, bars, and lectures of morality, are nothing to them; they break through them all; they have as much pleasure in cheating a father and mother as in cheating at cards.

Peach. Why, Polly, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our house.

AIR.—POLLY.

"Grim king of the ghosts," &c.

Can love be controll'd by advice?
Will Cupid our mothers obey?
Though my heart were as frozen as ice,
At his flame 'twould have melted away.
When he kiss'd me, so sweetly he press'd,
'Twas so sweet that I must have complied,
So I thought it both safest and best
To marry for fear you should chide.

Mrs. P. Then all the hopes of our family are gone, for ever and ever!

Peach. And Macheath may hang his father and mother-in-law, in hopes to get into their daughter's fortune.

Polly. I did not marry him, (as 'tis the fashion) coolly and deliberately, for honour or money——but I love him.

Mrs. P. Love him! worse and worse! I thought the girl had been better bred. Oh husband! husband! her folly makes me mad! my head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself——Oh! [*Faints.*

Peach. See, wench, to what a condition you have reduced your poor mother! A glass of cordial this instant! How the poor woman takes it to heart! [POLLY *goes out, and returns with it.*] Ah, hussy! now this is the only comfort your mother has left.

Polly. Give her another glass, sir; my mamma drinks double the quantity whenever she is out of order. This, you see, fetches her.

Mrs. P. The girl shows such readiness, and so much concern, that I almost could find in my heart to forgive her.

AIR.

"O Jenny, O Jenny, where hast thou been?"

O Polly, you might have toy'd and kiss'd:
By keeping men off you keep them on.

Polly. *But he so teased me,*
And he so pleased me,
What I did you must have done.

Mrs. P. Not with a highwayman—you sorry slut.

Peach. A word with you, wife. 'Tis no new thing for a wench to take a man without consent of parents. You know 'tis the frailty of woman, my dear!

Mrs. P. Yes, indeed, the sex is frail; but the first time a woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice methinks, for then or never is her time to make her

fortune: after that she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

Peach. Make yourself a little easy; I have a thought shall soon set all matters again to rights. Why so melancholy, Polly? since what is done cannot be undone, we must endeavour to make the best of it.

Mrs. P. Well, Polly, as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee.— Your father is too fond of you, hussy.

Polly. Then all my sorrows are at an end.

Mrs. P. A mighty likely speech in troth for a wench who is just married!

AIR.—POLLY.

"Thomas, I cannot," &c.

I like a ship in storms was toss'd,
Yet afraid to put into land,
For seized in the port the vessel's lost
Whose treasure is contraband.
The waves are laid,
My duty's paid;
O joy beyond expression!
Thus safe ashore
I ask no more;
My all's in my possession.

Peach. I hear customers in t'other room; go talk with them, Polly; but come again as soon as they are gone.—But hark ye, child, if 'tis the gentleman who was here yesterday about the repeating watch, say you can't get intelligence of it till to-morrow, for I lent it to Sukey Straddle, to make a figure with to-night at a tavern in Drury-lane. If t'other gentleman calls for the silver-hilted sword, you know beetle-browed Jemmy hath it on, and he doth not come

from Tunbridge till Tuesday night, so that it cannot be had till then. [*Exit* POLLY.] Dear wife, be a little pacified; don't let your passion run away with your senses: Polly, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

Mrs. P. If she had had only an intrigue with the fellow, why the very best families have excused and huddled up a frailty of that sort. 'Tis marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish.

Peach. But money, wife, is the true fuller's earth for reputations; there is not a spot or stain but what it can take out. I tell you, wife, I can make this match turn to our advantage.

Mrs. P. I am very sensible, husband, that Captain Macheath is worth money, but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three wives already, and then, if he should die in a session or two, Polly's dower would come into dispute.

Peach. That indeed is a point which ought to be considered. The lawyers are bitter enemies to those in our way; they don't care that any body should get a clandestine livelihood but themselves.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. 'Twas only Nimming Ned: he brought in a damask window-curtain, a hoop-petticoat, a pair of silver candlesticks, a perwig, and one silk stocking from the fire that happened last night.

Peach. There is not a fellow that is cleverer in his way, and saves more goods out of the fire, than Ned. But now, Polly, to your affair; for matters must not be as they are. You are married then, it seems?

Polly. Yes, sir.

Peach. And how do you propose to live, child?

Polly. Like other women, sir; upon the industry of my husband.

Mrs. P. What! is the wench turn'd fool? a highwayman's wife, like a soldier's, hath as little of his pay as of his company.

Peach. And had not you the common views of a gentlewoman in your marriage, Polly?

Polly. I don't know what you mean, sir.

Peach. Of a jointure, and of being a widow.

Polly. But I love him, sir: how then could I have thoughts of parting with him?

Peach. Parting with him! why that is the whole scheme and intention of all marriage articles. The comfortable estate of widowhood is the only hope that keeps up a wife's spirits. Where is the woman who would scruple to be a wife, if she had it in her power to be a widow whenever she pleased? If you have any views of this sort, Polly, I shall think the match not so very unreasonable.

Polly. How I dread to hear your advice! yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

Peach. Secure what he hath got, have him peach'd the next sessions, and then at once you are made a rich widow.

Polly. What! murder the man I love! the blood runs cold at my heart with the very thought of it!

Peach. Fie, Polly! what hath murder to do in the affair? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say that the captain himself would like that we should get the reward for his death sooner than a stranger. Why, Polly, the captain knows that as 'tis his employment to rob, so 'tis ours to take robbers; every man in his business: so that there is no malice in the case.

Mrs. P. To have him peached is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

AIR.—POLLY.

"Now ponder well, ye parents dear."

Oh ponder well! be not severe;
So save a wretched wife:
For on the rope that hangs my dear,
Depends poor Polly's life.

Mrs. P. But your duty to your parents, hussy, obliges you to hang him. What would many a wife give for such an opportunity!

Polly. What is a jointure, what is widowhood, to me? I know my heart; I cannot survive him. Thus, sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

Mrs. P. What! is the fool in love in earnest then? I hate thee for being particular. Why, wench, thou art a shame to thy very sex!

Polly. But hear me, mother—if you ever loved—

Mrs. P. Those cursed play books she reads have been her ruin! One word more, hussy, and I shall knock your brains out, if you have any.

Peach. Keep out of the way, Polly, for fear of mischief, and consider of what is proposed to you.

Mrs. P. Away, hussy. Hang your husband, and be dutiful. [POLLY *listens.*] The thing, husband, must and shall be done. If she will not know her duty, we know ours.

Peach. But really, my dear, it grieves one's heart to take off a great man. When I consider his personal bravery, his fine stratagems, how much we have already got by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I can't find in my heart to have a hand in his death: I wish you could have made Polly undertake it.

Mrs. P. But in case of necessity—our own lives are in danger.

Peach. Then indeed we must comply with the customs of the world, and make gratitude give way to interest—He shall be taken off.

Mrs. P. I'll undertake to manage Polly.

Peach. And I'll prepare matters for the Old Bailey.

[*Exeunt* PEACHUM *and* MRS. PEACHUM.

Polly. Now I'm a wretch indeed!—Methinks I see him already in the cart, sweeter and more lovely than the nosegay in his hand!—I hear the crowd extolling his resolution and intrepidity!—I see him at the tree!

the whole circle are in tears!—What then will come of Polly?—As yet I may inform him of t design, and aid him in his escape.—It shall be s But then he flies, absents himself, and I bar my from his dear, dear conversation! that too will tract me.—If he keeps out of the way, my papa mamma may in time relent, and we may be happ If he stays, he is hanged, and then he is lost for e —He intended to lie concealed in my room till dusk of the evening. If they are abroad, I'll thi stant let him out, lest some accident should pre him.

Enter MACHEATH.

AIR.

"Pretty parrot, say," &c.

Mac. *Pretty Polly, say,*
When I was away,
Did your fancy never stray
To some newer lover?

Polly. *Without disguise,*
Heaving sighs,
Doting eyes,
My constant heart discover.
Fondly let me loll!

Mac. *O pretty, pretty Poll!*

Polly. And are you as fond of me as ever, my d

Mac. Suspect my honour, my courage, suspect thing but my love.—May my pistols miss fire, my mare slip her shoulder while I am pursue ever I forsake thee!

Polly. Nay, my dear! I have no reason to d you, for I find, in the romance you lent me, non the great heroes were false in love.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Pray, fair one, be kind."

My heart was so free,
It roved like the bee,
Till Polly my passion requited;
I sipt each flower,
I changed ev'ry hour,
But here ev'ry flow'r is united.

Polly. Were you sentenced to transportation, sure, my dear, you could not leave me behind you—could you?

Mac. Is there any power, any force, that could tear me from thee? You might sooner tear a pension out of the hands of a courtier, a fee from a lawyer, a pretty woman from a looking-glass, or any woman from quadrille—But to tear me from thee is impossible!

AIR.

"Over the hills and far away."

Mac. *Were I laid on Greenland's coast,*
And in my arms embraced my lass,
Warm amidst eternal frost,
Too soon the half year's night would pass.
Polly. *Were I sold on Indian soil,*
Soon as the burning day was closed,
I could mock the sultry toil
When on my charmer's breast reposed.
Mac. *And I would love you all the day,*
Polly. *Every night would kiss and play,*
Mac. *If with me you'd fondly stray,*
Polly. *Over the hills, and far away.*

Polly. Yes, I would go with thee. But oh!——

how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee! We must part!

Mac. How! part!

Polly. We must, we must!—My papa and mamma are set against thy life: they now, even now, are in search after thee; they are preparing evidence against thee; thy life depends upon a moment!

AIR.—POLLY.

"Gin thou wert my awn thing."

O, what a pain it is to part!
Can I leave thee, can I leave thee?
O, what a pain it is to part!
Can thy Polly ever leave thee?
But lest death my love should thwart,
And bring thee to the fatal cart,
Thus I tear thee from my bleeding heart!
Fly hence, and let me leave thee.

One kiss, and then!—one kiss!—Begone!—Farewell!

Mac. My hand, my heart, my dear, is so riveted to thine, that I cannot unloose my hold!

Polly. But my papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of hope. A few weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all. Shall thy Polly hear from thee?

Mac. Must I then go?

Polly. And will not absence change your love?

Mac. If you doubt it, let me stay—and be hanged.

Polly. Oh, how I fear! how I tremble!—Go—but, when safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again; for, till then, Polly is wretched.

AIR.

"O the broom," &c.

Mac. *The miser thus a shilling sees,*
Which he's obliged to pay,
With sighs resigns it by degrees,
And fears 'tis gone for aye.

Polly. *The boy thus, when his sparrow's flown,*
The bird in silence eyes;
But soon as out of sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs, and cries.

[Exeunt.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Tavern near Newgate.

JEMMY TWITCHER, CROOKFINGER'D JACK, WAT DREARY, ROBIN OF BAGSHOT, NIMMING NED, HARRY PADDINGTON, MAT'-O' THE-MINT, BEN BUDGE, *and the Rest of the Gang, at the Table, with Wine, Brandy, and Tobacco.*

Ben. But pr'ythee, Mat, what is become of thy brother Tom? I have not seen him since my return from transportation.

Mat. Poor brother Tom had an accident, this time twelvemonth, and so clever made a fellow as he was, I could not save him from these stealing rascals, the surgeons; and now, poor man, he is among the otamies, at Surgeons' Hall.

Ben. So, it seems, his time was come.

Jemmy. But the present time is ours, and nobody alive hath more. Why are the laws levelled at us? are we more dishonest than the rest of mankind? What we win, gentlemen, is our own, by the law of arms, and the right of conquest.

Jack. Where shall we find such another set of practical philosophers, who, to a man, are above the fear of death?

Wat. Sound men and true!

Robin. Of tried courage, and indefatigable industry!

Ned. Who is there here that would not die for his friend?

Harry. Who is there here that would betray him for his interest?

Mat. Show me a gang of courtiers that can say as much.

Ben. We are for a just partition of the world; for every man has a right to enjoy life.

Mat. We retrench the superfluities of mankind. The world is avaricious, and I hate avarice. A covetous fellow, like a jackdaw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the robbers of mankind; for money was made for the free-hearted and generous: and where is the injury of taking from another what he hath not the heart to make use of?

Jemmy. Our several stations for the day are fixed. Good luck attend us all! Fill the glasses!

AIR.—MAT.

"Fill ev'ry glass," &c.

Fill ev'ry glass, for wine inspires us,
And fires us,
With courage, love, and joy.
Women and wine should life employ;
Is there aught else on earth desirous?

Chorus. *Fill ev'ry glass, &c.*

Enter MACHEATH.

Mac. Gentlemen, well met; my heart hath been with you this hour, but an unexpected affair hath detained me. No ceremony, I beg you!

Mat. We were just breaking up, to go upon duty. Am I to have the honour of taking the air with you, sir, this evening, upon the heath? I drink a dram, now and then, with the stage-coachmen, in the way of friendship and intelligence; and I know that, about this time, there will be passengers upon the western road, who are worth speaking with.

Mac. I was to have been of that party—but—

Mat. But what, sir?

Mac. Is there any one that suspects my courage?

Mat. We have all been witnesses of it.

Mac. My honour and truth to the gang?

Mat. I'll be answerable for it.

Mac. In the division of our booty, have I ever shown the least marks of avarice or injustice?

Mat. By these questions, something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

Mac. I have a fixed confidence, gentlemen, in you all, as men of honour, and as such I value and respect you. Peachum is a man that is useful to us.

Mat. Is he about to play us any foul play? I'll shoot him through the head.

Mac. I beg you, gentlemen, act with conduct and discretion. A pistol is your last resort.

Mat. He knows nothing of this meeting.

Mac. Business cannot go on without him: he is a man who knows the world, and is a necessary agent to us. We have had a slight difference, and, till it is accommodated, I shall be obliged to keep out of his way. Any private dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my friends. You must continue to act under his direction; for, the moment we break loose from him, our gang is ruined.

Mat. He is, to us, of great convenience.

Mac. Make him believe I have quitted the gang, which I can never do but with life. At our private quarters I will continue to meet you. A week, or so, will probably reconcile us.

Mat. Your instructions shall be observed. 'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several duties; so, till the evening, at our quarters in Moorfields, we bid you farewell.

Mac. I shall wish myself with you. Success attend you. [*Sits down, melancholy, at the Table.*

AIR.—MAT.

March in Rinaldo, with Drums and Trumpets.

Let us take the road;
Hark! I hear the sound of coaches,
The hour of attack approaches,
To your arms, brave boys, and load.
See the ball I hold!
Let the chemists toil like asses,
Our fire their fire surpasses,
And turns all our lead to gold.

[*The* GANG, *ranged in the Front of the Stage, load their Pistols, and stick them under their Girdles, then go off, singing the first Part in Chorus.*

Mac. What a fool is a fond wench! Polly is most confoundedly bit. I love the sex; and a man who loves money might as well be contented with one guinea, as I with one woman. The town, perhaps, hath been as much obliged to me for recruiting it with free-hearted ladies, as to any recruiting officer in the army. If it were not for us and the other gentlemen of the sword, Drury-Lane would be uninhabited.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Would you have a young virgin."

If the heart of a man is depress'd with cares,
The mist is dispell'd when a woman appears;
Like the notes of a fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly,
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.
Roses and lilies her cheeks disclose,
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those;
Press her,
Caress her,
With blisses,
Her kisses
Dissolve us in pleasure and soft repose.

I must have women—there is nothing unbends the mind like them: money is not so strong a cordial for the time——Drawer!

Enter DRAWER.

Is the porter gone for all the ladies, according to my directions?

Drawer. I expect him back every minute: but you know, sir, you sent him as far as Hockley-in-the-Hole for three of the ladies; for one in Vinegar

Yard, and for the rest of them, somewhere about Lewkner's Lane. Sure some of them are below, for I hear the bar bell. As they come, I will show them up. Coming! coming! [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. COAXER, DOLLY TRULL, MRS. VIXEN, BETTY DOXY, JENNY DIVER, MRS. SLAMMEKIN, SUKEY TAWDRY, *and* MOLLY BRAZEN.

Mac. Dear Mrs. Coaxer, you are welcome! you look charmingly to-day; I hope you don't want the repairs of quality, and lay on paint.—Dolly Trull! kiss me, you slut! are you as amorous as ever, hussy? you are always so taken up with stealing hearts, that you don't allow yourself time to steal any thing else.—Ah, Dolly! thou wilt ever be a coquette.—Mrs. Vixen, I'm yours! I always loved a woman of wit and spirit; they make charming mistresses, but plaguy wives.—Betty Doxy! come hither, hussy: do you drink as hard as ever? you had better stick to good wholesome beer, for, in troth, Betty, strong waters will, in time, ruin your constitution: you should leave those to your betters.—What! and my pretty Jenny Diver too! as prim and demure as ever! there is not any prude, though ever so high bred, hath a more sanctified look, with a more mischievous heart: ah, thou art a dear, artful hypocrite!—Mrs. Slammekin! as careless and genteel as ever! all you fine ladies, who know your own beauty, affect an undress.—But see! here's Sukey Tawdry come to contradict what I was saying.—Molly Brazen! [*She kisses him.*] That's well done! I love a free-hearted wench: thou hast a most agreeable assurance, girl, and art as willing as a turtle.—But hark! I hear music! "If music be the food of love, play on!" Ere you seat yourselves, ladies, what think you of a dance? Come in.

Enter HARPER.

Play the French tune that Mrs. Slammekin is so fond of.

A Dance; then this Song and Chorus.

AIR.

Cotillion.

Youth's the season made for joys,
Love is then our duty;
She alone who that employs,
Well deserves her beauty.
Let's be gay,
While we may,
Beauty's a flower despised in decay.

Chorus. *Youth's the season, &c.*

Let us drink and sport to-day,
Ours is not to-morrow;
Love with youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the wing,
Life never knows the return of spring.

Chorus. *Let us drink, &c.*

Mac. Now, pray, ladies, take your places. Here, drawer, bring us more wine. If any of the ladies choose gin, I hope they will be so free as to call for it.

Jenny. You look as if you meant me. Wine is strong enough for me. Indeed, sir, I never drink strong waters but when I have the colic.

Mac. Just the excuse of the fine ladies! why, a

lady of quality is never without the colic. I hope, Mrs. Coaxer, you have had good success of late in your visits among the mercers.

Mrs. C. We have so many interlopers; yet, with industry, one may still have a little picking.—If any woman hath more art than another, to be sure 'tis Jenny Diver.

Mac. Have done with your compliments, ladies, and drink about. You are not so fond of me, Jenny, as you used to be.

Jenny. 'Tis not convenient, sir, to show my fondness among so many rivals. 'Tis your own choice, and not the warmth of my inclination, that will determine you.—But, to be sure, sir, with so much good fortune as you have had upon the road, you must be grown immensely rich.

Mac. The road, indeed, hath done me justice, but the gaming-table hath been my ruin.

Jenny. A man of courage should never put anything to the risk but his life. These are the tools of a man of honour: cards and dice are only fit for cowardly cheats, who prey upon their friends.

[*She takes up his Pistol;* SUKEY TAWDRY *takes up the other.*

Sukey. This, sir, is fitter for your hand. Besides your loss of money, 'tis a loss to the ladies. How fond could I be of you! but, before company, 'tis ill bred.

Mac. Wanton hussies!

Jenny. I must, and will, have a kiss, to give my wine a zest.

[*They take him about the Neck, and make Signs to* PEACHUM *and* CONSTABLES, *who rush in upon him.*

Peach. I seize you, sir, as my prisoner.

Mac. Was this well done, Jenny?—Women are decoy ducks; who can trust them? beasts, jades, jilts, harpies, furies, whores!

Peach. Your case, Mr. Macheath, is not particular. The greatest heroes have been ruined by women.—But, to do them justice, I must own they are a pretty sort of creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, sir, take your leave of the ladies; and, if they have a mind to make you a visit, they will be sure to find you at home. This gentleman, ladies, lodges in Newgate. Constables, wait upon the Captain to his lodgings.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"When first I laid siege to my Chloris."

At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure;
Let me go where I will,
In all kinds of ill,
I shall find no such furies as these are.

[*Exit* MACHEATH, *guarded with* PEACHUM *and* CONSTABLES; *and the* LADIES *after, with great Ceremony.*

SCENE II.

Newgate.

Enter LOCKIT, TURNKEYS, MACHEATH, *and* CONSTABLES.

Lockit. Noble Captain, you are welcome! you have not been a lodger of mine this year and a half. You know the custom, sir; garnish, Captain, garnish.—Hand me down those fetters there.

Mac. Those, Mr. Lockit, seem to be the heaviest of the whole set. With your leave, I should like the further pair better.

Lockit. Look ye, Captain, we know what is fittest for our prisoners. When a gentleman uses me with civility, I always do the best I can to please him.—Hand them down, I say.—We have them of all prices, from one guinea to ten; and 'tis fitting every gentleman should please himself.

Mac. I understand you, sir. [*Gives Money.*] The fees here are so many, and so exorbitant, that few fortunes can bear the expense of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a gentleman.

Lockit. Those, I see, will fit the Captain better.—Take down the further pair.—Do but examine them, sir—Never was better work—How genteelly they are made!—They will sit as easy as a glove, and the nicest man in England might not be ashamed to wear them. [*He puts on the Chains.*] If I had the best gentleman in the land in my custody, I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, sir—I now leave you to your private meditations.

[*Exeunt* LOCKIT, TURNKEYS, *and* CONSTABLES

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Courtiers, courtiers, think it no harm."

Man may escape from rope and gun,
Nay, some have outlived the doctor's pill;
Who takes a woman must be undone,
That basilisk is sure to kill.
The fly, that sips treacle, is lost in the sweets,
So he, that tastes woman, woman, woman,
He, that tastes woman, ruin meets.

To what a woful plight have I brought myself Here must I (all day long till I am hanged) be con

fident to hear the reproaches of a wench, who lays her ruin at my door—I am in the custody of her father; and, to be sure, if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my execution.—But I promised the wench marriage.—What signifies a promise to a woman? does not man, in marriage itself, promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, women will believe us: for they look upon a promise as an excuse for following their own inclinations.—But here comes Lucy, and I cannot get from her—'would I were deaf!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. You base man, you!—how can you look me in the face, after what hath passed between us?—Oh, Macheath! thou hast robbed me of my quiet—to see thee tortured would give me pleasure.

AIR.—LUCY.

"A lovely lass to a friar came."

Thus, when a good housewife sees a rat
In her trap in the morning taken,
With pleasure her heart goes pit-a-pat,
In revenge for her loss of bacon.
Then she throws him
To the dog or cat,
To be worried, crush'd, and shaken.

Mac. Have you no bowels, no tenderness, my dear Lucy! to see a husband in these circumstances?

Lucy. A husband!

Mac. In every respect but the form, and that, my dear, may be said over us at any time.——Friends should not insist upon ceremonies. From a man of honour his word is as good as his bond.

Lucy. It is the pleasure of all you fine men to sult the women you have ruined.

Mac. The very first opportunity, my dear, (have patience) you shall be my wife in what manner you please.

Lucy. Insinuating monster! And so you thin know nothing of the affair of Miss Polly Peachu —I could tear thy eyes out.

Mac. Sure, Lucy, you can't be such a fool as t jealous of Polly!

Lucy. Are you not married to her, you brute, y

Mac. Married! very good. The wench give out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy g opinion. 'Tis true I go to the house, I chat with girl, I kiss her, I say a thousand things to her (a gentlemen do) that mean nothing, to divert mys and now the silly jade hath set it about that I married to her, to let me know what she would b Indeed, my dear Lucy! those violent passions be of ill consequence to a woman in your condit

Lucy. Come, come, captain, for all your assura you know that Miss Polly hath put it out of power to do me the justice you promised me.

Mac. A jealous woman believes every thing passion suggests. To convince you of my since if we can find the ordinary, I shall have no scru of making you my wife; and I know the co quence of having two at a time.

Lucy. That you are only to be hanged, and sc rid of them both.

Mac. I am ready, my dear Lucy! to give satisfaction—if you think there is any in marri —What can a man of honour say more?

Lucy. So then it seems you are not marrie Miss Polly?

Mac. You know, Lucy, the girl is prodigio conceited: no man can say a civil thing to her,

(like other fine ladies) her vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

AIR.

"The Sun had loosed his weary teams."

The first time at the looking-glass
The mother sets her daughter,
The image strikes the smiling lass
With self-love ever after.
Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,
Thinks every charm grows stronger;
But, alas, vain maid! all eyes but your own
Can see you are not younger.

When women consider their own beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their demands; for they expect their lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

Lucy. Yonder is my father——Perhaps this way we may light upon the ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your word——for I long to be made an honest woman. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEACHUM *and* LOCKIT, *with an Account Book.*

Lockit. In this last affair, brother Peachum, we are agreed. You have consented to go halves in Macheath.

Peach. We shall never fall out about an execution. But as to that article, pray how stands your last year's account?

Lockit. If you will run your eye over it, you'll find 'tis fair and clearly stated.

Peach. This long arrear of the government is very hard upon us. Can it be expected that we should hang our acquaintance for nothing, when our betters will hardly save theirs without being paid for it? Un-

less the people in employment pay better, I promise them for the future I shall let other rogues live beside their own.

Lockit. Perhaps, brother, they are afraid those matters may be carried too far. We are treated too by them with contempt, as if our profession were not reputable.

Peach. In one respect indeed our employment may be reckoned dishonest, because, like great statesmen, we encourage those who betray their friends.

Lockit. Such language, brother, any where else might turn to your prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

AIR.—LOCKIT.

"How happy are we," &c.

When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be;
If you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
Each cries—That was levell'd at me.

Peach. Here's poor Ned Clincher's name, I see: sure, brother Lockit, there was a little unfair proceeding in Ned's case; for he told me in the condemned hold, that, for value received, you had promised him a session or two longer without molestation.

Lockit. Mr. Peachum—this is the first time my honour was ever called in question.

Peach. Business is at an end—if once we act dishonourably.

Lockit. Who accuses me?

Peach. You are warm, brother.

Lockit. He that attacks my honour, attacks my livelihood——and this usage—sir—is not to be borne.

Peach. Since you provoke me to speak—I must tell you too, that Mrs. Coaxer charges you with defrauding her of her information money for the apprehending of Curl-pated Hugh. Indeed, indeed, brother, we must punctually pay our spies, or we shall have no information.

Lockit. Is this language to me, sirrah—who have saved you from the gallows, sirrah!

[*Collaring each other.*

Peach. If I am hanged, it shall be for ridding the world of an arrant rascal.

Lockit. This hand shall do the office of the halter you deserve, and throttle you——you dog!

Peach. Brother, brother—we are both in the wrong—we shall be both losers in the dispute——for you know we have it in our power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate.

Lockit. Nor you so provoking.

Peach. 'Tis our mutual interest, 'tis for the interest of the world, we should agree. If I said any thing, brother, to the prejudice of your character, I ask pardon.

Lockit. Brother Peachum—I can forgive as well as resent——Give me your hand; suspicion does not become a friend.

Peach. I only meant to give you occasion to justify yourself. But I must now step home, for I expect the gentleman about this snuff-box that Filch nimmed two nights ago in the Park. I appointed him at this hour. [*Exit.*

Enter LUCY.

Lockit. Whence come you, hussy?

Lucy. My tears might answer that question.

Lockit. You have been whimpering and fondling like a spaniel, over the fellow that hath abused you.

Lucy. One can't help love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my power to obey you and hate him.

Lockit. Learn to bear your husband's death like a reasonable woman; 'tis not the fashion now-a-days so much as to affect sorrow upon these occasions. No woman would ever marry if she had not the chance of mortality for a release. Act like a woman of spirit, hussy, and thank your father for what he is doing.

AIR.—LUCY.

"Of a noble race was Shenkin."

Is then his fate decreed, sir,
Such a man can I think of quitting?
When first we met, so moves me yet,
O see how my heart is splitting!

Lockit. Look ye, Lucy, there is no saving him—so I think you must even do like other widows—buy yourself weeds, and be cheerful.

AIR.—LOCKIT.

You'll think, ere many days ensue,
This sentence not severe;
I hang your husband, child, 'tis true,
But with him hang your care.
Twang dang dillo dee.

Like a good wife, go moan over your dying husband; that, child, is your duty—Consider, girl, you can't have the man and the money too——so make yourself as easy as you can, by getting all you can from him. [*Exit.*

Enter MACHEATH.

Lucy. Though the ordinary was out of the way

to-day, I hope, my dear, you will, upon the first opportunity, quiet my scruples.—Oh, sir! my father's hard heart is not to be softened, and I am in the utmost despair.

Mac. But if I could raise a small sum——would not twenty guineas, think you, move him?—Of all the arguments in the way of business, the perquisite is the most prevailing.—Money, well-timed, and properly applied, will do any thing.

Lucy. What love or money can do shall be done; for all my comfort depends upon your safety.

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Where is my dear husband?—Was a rope ever intended for this neck?——Oh let me throw my arms about it, and throttle thee with love!—Why dost thou turn away from me?—'tis thy Polly—'tis thy wife.

Mac. Was ever such an unfortunate rascal as I am!

Lucy. Was there ever such another villain!

Polly. Oh, Macheath! was it for this we parted? Taken! imprisoned! tried! hanged!--Cruel reflection! I'll stay with thee till death——no force shall tear thy dear wife from thee now.—What means my love?—not one kind word! not one kind look!—Think what thy Polly suffers to see thee in this condition!

Mac. I must disown her. [*Aside*]. The wench is distracted!

Lucy. Am I then bilked of my virtue? Can I have no reparation? Sure men were born to lie, and woman to believe them! Oh villain! villain!

Polly. Am I not thy wife?—Thy neglect of me, thy aversion to me, too severely proves it.—Look on me—Tell me, am I not thy wife?

Lucy. Perfidious wretch!

Polly. Barbarous husband!

Lucy. Hadst thou been hanged five months ago, I had been happy.

Polly. If you had been kind to me till death, it would not have vexed me—and that's no very unreasonable request (though from a wife) to a man who hath not above seven or eight days to live.

Lucy. Art thou, then, married to another? Hast thou two wives, monster?

Mac. If women's tongues can cease for an answer—hear me.

Lucy. I won't.—Flesh and blood can't bear my usage!

Polly. Shall not I claim my own? Justice bids me speak.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Have you heard of a frolicsome ditty?"

How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away!
But, while ye thus tease me together,
To neither a word will I say;
But toll de roll, &c.

Polly. Sure, my dear, there ought to be some preference shown to a wife—at least she may claim the appearance of it. He must be distracted with misfortunes, or he could not use me thus.

Lucy. Oh villain! villain! thou hast deceived me!—I could even inform against thee with pleasure.—Not a prude wishes more heartily to have facts against her intimate acquaintance, than I now wish to have facts against thee. I would have her satisfaction, and they should all out.

AIR.

"Irish trot."

Polly. *I'm bubbled.*
Lucy. *I'm bubbled.*
Polly. *Oh, how I'm troubled!*
Lucy. *Bamboozled and bit!*
Polly. *My distresses are doubled.*
Lucy. *When you come to the tree, should the hangman refuse,*
These fingers, with pleasure, could fasten the noose.
Polly. *I'm bubbled, &c.*

Mac. Be pacified, my dear Lucy—this is all a fetch of Polly's, to make me desperate with you, in case I get off. If I am hanged, she would fain have the credit of being thought my widow.—Really, Polly, this is no time for a dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of marriage, I am thinking of hanging.

Polly. And hast thou the heart to persist in disowning me?

Mac. And hast thou the heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, Polly, dost thou seek to aggravate my misfortunes?

Lucy. Really, Miss Peachum, you do but expose yourself; besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a gentleman in his circumstances.

AIR.—POLLY.

Cease your funning;
Force or cunning
Never shall my heart trepan;
All these sallies
Are but malice,
To seduce my constant man.

'Tis most certain,
By their flirting,
Women oft have envy shown;
Pleas'd to ruin
Others' wooing,
Never happy in their own!

Decency, madam, methinks, might teach you to behave yourself with some reserve to the husband, while his wife is present.

Mac. But, seriously, Polly, this is carrying the joke a little too far.

Lucy. If you are determined, madam, to raise a disturbance in the prison, I shall be obliged to send for the turnkey to show you the door. I am sorry madam, you force me to be so ill bred.

Polly. Give me leave to tell you, madam, these forward airs don't become you in the least, madam and my duty, madam, obliges me to stay with my husband, madam.

AIR.

"Good morrow, Gossip Joan."

Lucy. *Why, how now, Madam Flirt?*
If you thus must chatter,
And are for flinging dirt,
Let's try who best can spatter,
Madam Flirt!

Polly. *Why, how now, saucy jade?*
Sure, the wench is tipsy!
How can you see me made [To hi
The scoff of such a gipsy?
Saucy jade! [To h

Enter PEACHUM.

Peach. Where's my wench? Ah, hussy, hussy!—Come home, you slut! and when your fellow is hanged, hang yourself, to make your family some amends.

Polly. Dear, dear father! do not tear me from him.—I must speak—I have more to say to him.—Oh, twist thy fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee!

Peach. Sure, all women are alike! if ever they commit one folly, they are sure to commit another, by exposing themselves.—Away—not a word more.—You are my prisoner, now, hussy.

AIR.—POLLY.

"Irish howl."

No pow'r on earth can e'er divide
The knot that sacred love hath tied,
When parents draw against our mind,
The true love's knot they faster bind.
Oh, oh, ray, oh Amborah—Oh, oh, &c.
[*Holding* MACHEATH, PEACHUM *pulling her.*—
[*Exeunt* PEACHUM *and* POLLY.

Mac. I am naturally compassionate, wife, so that I could not use the wench as she deserved, which made you, at first, suspect there was something in what she said.

Lucy. Indeed, my dear, I was strangely puzzled!

Mac. If that had been the case, her father would never have brought me into this circumstance—No, Lucy, I had rather die than be false to thee!

Lucy. How happy am I, if you say this from your heart; for I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hanged, than in the arms of another.

Mac. But couldst thou bear to see me hanged?

Lucy. Oh, Macheath! I could never live to see that day!

Mac. You see, Lucy, in the account of love, you are in my debt.—Make me, if possible, love thee more, and let me owe my life to thee.—If you refuse to assist me, Peachum, and your father, will immediately put me beyond all means of escape.

Lucy. My father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the prisoners, and I fancy he is now taking his nap in his own room.—If I can procure the keys, shall I go off with thee, my dear?

Mac. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lie concealed. As soon as the search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee; till then, my heart is thy prisoner.

Lucy. Come then, my dear husband, owe thy life to me; and, though you love me not, be grateful.—But that Polly runs in my head strangely.

Mac. A moment of time may make us unhappy for ever.

AIR.—LUCY.

"The Lass of Patie's Mill."

I like the fox shall grieve,
Whose mate hath left her side;
Whom hounds, from morn to eve,
Chase o'er the country wide.
Where can my lover hide?
Where cheat the wary pack?
If love be not his guide,
He never will come back. [Exeunt.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Newgate.

LOCKIT, LUCY.

Lockit. To be sure, wench, you must have been aiding and abetting to help him to this escape?

Lucy. Sir, here hath been Peachum, and his daughter Polly, and, to be sure, they know the ways of Newgate as well as if they had been born and bred in the place all their lives. Why must all your suspicion light upon me?

Lockit. Lucy, Lucy, I will have none of these shuffling answers!

Lucy. Well then, if I know any thing of him, I wish I may be burned!

Lockit. Keep your temper, Lucy, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

Lucy. Keep yours, sir—I do wish I may be burned, I do; and what can I say more to convince you?

Lockit. Did he tip handsomely?—How much did he come down with? Come, hussy, don't cheat your father, and I shall not be angry with you—Perhaps you have made a better bargain with him than I could have done—How much, my good girl?

Lucy. You know, sir, I am fond of him, and would have given money to have kept him with me.

Lockit. Ah, Lucy! thy education might have put thee more upon thy guard; for a girl in the bar of an ale-house is always besieged.

Lucy. If you can forgive me, sir, I will make a fair confession; for, to be sure, he hath been a most barbarous villain to me!

Lockit. And so you have let him escape, hussy—have you?

Lucy. When a woman loves, a kind look, a tender word, can persuade her to any thing, and I could ask no other bribe. Notwithstanding all he swore, I am now fully convinced that Polly Peachum is actually his wife—Did I let him escape, fool that I was! to go to her? Polly will wheedle herself into his money; and then Peachum will hang him, and cheat us both.

Lockit. So I am to be ruined, because, forsooth, you must be in love!—A very pretty excuse!

Lucy. I could murder that impudent, happy strumpet!—I gave him his life, and that creature enjoys the sweets of it—Ungrateful Macheath!

AIR.—LUCY.

"South Sea Ballad."

My love is all madness and folly;
Alone I lie,
Toss, tumble, and cry,
What a happy creature is Polly!
Was e'er such a wretch as I?
With rage, I redden like scarlet,
That my dear inconstant varlet,
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!
This, this my resentment alarms.

Lockit. And so, after all this mischief, I must stay here to be entertained with your caterwauling, Mistress Puss!—Out of my sight, wanton strumpet!—You shall fast, and mortify yourself into reason, with, now and then, a little handsome discipline, to bring you to your senses.—Go!—[*Exit* LUCY.]

Peachum, then, intends to outwit me in this affair, but I'll be even with him!—The dog is leaky in his liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the secret from him, and turn this affair to my own advantage. Lucy!

Enter LUCY.

Are there any of Peachum's people now in the house?

Lucy. Filch, sir, is drinking a quartern of strong waters, in the next room, with Black Moll.

Lockit. Bid him come to me. [*Exit.*

Enter FILCH.

Why, boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half starved, —like a shotten herring.—But, boy, canst thou tell me where thy master is to be found?

Filch. At his lock, sir, at the Crooked Billet.

Lockit. Very well—I have nothing more with you. [*Exit* FILCH.] I'll go to him there, for I have many important affairs to settle with him, and in the way of those transactions I'll artfully get into his secret—so that Macheath shall not remain a day longer out of my clutches. [*Exit.*

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Jealousy, rage, love, and fear, are at once tearing me to pieces. How am I weather-beaten and shattered with distresses!

AIR.—LUCY.

"One evening having lost my way."

I'm like a skiff on the ocean tost,
Now high, now low, with each billow borne,
With her rudder broke and her anchor lost,
Deserted and all forlorn.
While thus I lie rolling and tossing all night,
That Polly lies sporting on seas of delight!
Revenge, revenge, revenge,
Shall appease my restless sprite.

I have the ratsbane ready——I run no risk; for I can lay her death upon the gin, and so many die of that naturally, that I shall never be called in question—But say I were to be hanged—I never could be hanged for any thing that would give me greater comfort than the poisoning that slut.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Madam, here's Miss Polly come to wait upon you.

Lucy. Show her in.

Enter POLLY.

Dear madam! your servant.—I hope you will pardon my passion when I was so happy to see you last—I was so overrun with the spleen, that I was perfectly out of myself; and really when one hath the spleen every thing is to be excused by a friend.

AIR.—LUCY.

"Now, Roger, I'll tell thee, because thou'rt my son.

When a wife's in the pout,
(As she's sometimes no doubt)
The good husband, as meek as a lamb,
Her vapours to still,
First grants her her will,
And the quieting draught is a dram;
Poor man! and the quieting draught is a dram.

—I wish all our quarrels might have so comfortable a reconciliation.

Polly. I have no excuse for my own behaviour, madam, but my misfortunes—and really, madam, I suffer too upon your account.

Lucy. But, Miss Polly—in the way of friendship, will you give me leave to propose a glass of cordial to you?

Polly. Strong waters are apt to give me the headache.—I hope, madam, you will excuse me?

Lucy. Not the greatest lady in the land could have better in her closet for her own private drinking.—You seem mighty low in spirits, my dear!

Polly. I am sorry, madam, my health will not allow me to accept of your offer——I should not have left you in the rude manner I did when we met last, madam, had not my papa hauled me away so unexpectedly.—I was indeed somewhat provoked, and perhaps might use some expressions that were disrespectful—but really, madam, the captain treated me with so much contempt and cruelty, that I deserved your pity rather than your resentment.

Lucy. But since his escape, no doubt, all matters are made up again——Ah Polly! Polly! 'tis I am the unhappy wife, and he loves you as if you were only his mistress.

Polly. Sure, madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the object of your jealousy——A man is always afraid of a woman who loves him too well—So that I must expect to be neglected and avoided.

Lucy. Then our cases, my dear Polly, are exactly alike: both of us indeed have been too fond. Indeed, my dear Polly, we are both of us a cup too low; let me prevail upon you to accept of my offer.

AIR.—LUCY.

"Come, sweet lass."

Come, sweet lass,
Let's banish sorrow
Till to-morrow;
Come, sweet lass,
Let's take a chirping glass.
Wine can clear
The vapours of despair,
And make us light as air;
Then drink and banish care.

I can't bear, child, to see you in such low spirits—and I must persuade you to what I know will do you good——I shall now soon be even with the hypocritical strumpet. [*Aside.—Exit.*

Polly. All this wheedling of Lucy can't be for nothing—at this time too, when I know she hates me!—The dissembling of a woman is always the forerunner of mischief—By pouring strong waters down my throat she thinks to pump some secrets out of me—I'll be upon my guard, and won't taste a drop of her liquor, I'm resolved.

Enter LUCY, *with strong Waters.*

Lucy. Come, Miss Polly.

Polly. Indeed, child, you have given yourself trouble to no purpose—You must, my dear, excuse me.

Lucy. Really, Miss Polly, you are as squeamishly affected about taking a cup of strong waters as a lady before company. I vow, Polly, I shall take it monstrously ill if you refuse me.

Polly. I protest, madam, it goes against me——What do I see! Macheath again in custody!—now every glimmering of happiness is lost!

[*Drops the Glass of Liquor on the Ground.*

Enter LOCKIT, MACHEATH, *and* PEACHUM.

Lockit. Set your heart at rest, captain——You have neither the chance of love or money for another escape, for you are ordered to be called down upon your trial immediately.

Peach. Away, hussies!——This is not a time for a man to be hampered with his wives——you see the gentleman is in chains already.

Lucy. O husband, husband! my heart longed to see thee, but to see thee thus distracts me!

Polly. Will not my dear husband look upon his Polly? Why hadst thou not flown to me for protection? with me thou hadst been safe.

AIR.

"The last time I came o'er the moor."

Polly. *Hither, dear husband, turn your eyes!*
Lucy. *Bestow one glance to cheer me.*
Polly. *Think, with that look, thy Polly dies.*
Lucy. *Oh, shun me not, but hear me!*
Polly. *'Tis Polly sues.*
Lucy. *'Tis Lucy speaks.*
Polly. *Is thus true love requited?*
Lucy. *My heart is bursting.*
Polly. *Mine, too, breaks.*
Lucy. *Must I——*
Polly. *Must I be slighted?*

Mac. What would you have me say, ladies? You see the affair will soon be at an end, without my disobliging either of you.

Peach. But the settling of this point, Captain, might prevent a law-suit between your two widows.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Tom Tinker's my true love," &c.

Which way shall I turn me? how can I decide?
Wives, the day of your death, are as fond as a bride.
One wife is too much for most husbands to hear,
But two at a time, there's no mortal can bear,
This way and that way, and which way I will,
What would comfort the one, t'other wife would take ill.

Polly. But, if his own misfortunes have made him insensible to mine, a father, sure, will be more compassionate!—Dear, dear sir! sink the material evidence, and bring him off at his trial—Polly, upon her knees, begs it of you.

AIR.—POLLY.

"I am a poor shepherd, undone."

When my hero in court appears,
And stands arraign'd for his life,
Then think of poor Polly's tears,
For ah! poor Polly's his wife.
Like the sailor, he holds up his hand,
Distress'd on the dashing wave;
To die a dry death at land
Is as bad as a wat'ry grave.
And alas, poor Polly!
Alack, and well-a-day!
Before I was in love,
Oh! ev'ry month was May.

Peach. Set your heart at rest, Polly—your l band is to die to-day; therefore, if you are no ready provided, 'tis high time to look about for other.—There's comfort for you, you slut!

Lockit. We are ready, sir, to conduct you to Old Bailey.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

"Bonny Dundee."

The charge is prepared, the lawyers are met,
The judges all ranged; (a terrible show!)
I go undismay'd, for death is a debt—
A debt on demand, so take what I owe.
Then farewell, my love—dear charmers, adieu
Contented I die—'tis the better for you.
Here ends all dispute, for the rest of our lives,
For this way, at once, I please all my wives.

Now, gentlemen, I am ready to attend you.

[*Exeunt* PEACHUM, LOCKIT, MACHEATH

SCENE II.

The condemned Hold.

MACHEATH, *in a melancholy Posture.*

AIR.

"Happy Groves."

Oh, cruel, cruel, cruel case!
Must I suffer this disgrace?

AIR.

"Of all the girls that are so smart."

Of all the friends in time of grief,
When threat'ning Death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring relief,
As this best friend, a brimmer. [Drinks.

AIR.

"Britons, strike home."

nce I must swing—I scorn, I scorn to wince or whine. [Rises.

AIR.

"Chevy Chace."

But now again, my spirits sink,
I'll raise them high with wine.
[Drinks a Glass of Wine.

AIR.

"To old Sir Simon the king."

But valour the stronger grows,
The stronger liquor we're drinking,
And how can we feel our woes,
When we've lost the trouble of thinking?
[Drinks.

AIR.

"Joy to great Cæsar."

If thus a man can die,
Much bolder with brandy.
[Pours out a Bumper of Brandy.

AIR.

"There was an old woman," &c.

So I drink off this bumper—and now I can stand the test,
And my comrades shall see that I die as brave as the best.
[Drinks.

AIR.

"Did you ever hear of a gallant sailor?"

But can I leave my pretty hussies
Without one tear, or tender sigh?

AIR.

"Why are mine eyes thus flowing?"

Their eyes, their lips, their busses,
Recal my love—Ah! must I die?

AIR.

"Green Sleeves."

Since laws were made for every degree,
To curb vice in others, as well as in me,
I wonder we ha'n't better company
Upon Tyburn tree.
But gold from law can take out the sting;
And if rich men, like us, were to swing,
'Twould thin the land, such numbers to string
Upon Tyburn tree.

Enter GAOLER.

Gaoler. Some friends of yours, Captain, desire to be admitted—I leave you together. [*Exit.*

Enter BEN BUDGE *and* MAT *of the* MINT.

Mac. For my having broke prison, you see, gentlemen, I am ordered immediate execution—The sheriff's officers, I believe, are now at the door. That Jemmy Twitcher should 'peach me, I own surprised me—'Tis a plain proof that the world is all alike, and that even our gang can no more trust one another than other people; therefore, I beg you, gentlemen, to look well to yourselves, for, in all probability, you may live some months longer.

Mat. We are all heartily sorry, Captain, for your misfortune, but 'tis what we must all come to.

Mac. Peachum and Lockit, you know, are infamous scoundrels—their lives are as much in your power, as yours are in theirs—Remember your dying friend—'Tis my last request—Bring those villains to the gallows before you, and I am satisfied.

Mat. We'll do it.

Enter GAOLER.

Gaoler. Miss Polly and Miss Lucy entreat a word with you. [*Exit.*

Mac. Gentlemen, adieu!

[*Exeunt* BEN BUDGE *and* MAT *of the* MINT.

Enter LUCY *and* POLLY.

Mac. My dear Lucy! my dear Polly! whatsoever hath passed between us is now at an end.

AIR.

"All you that must take a leap," &c.

Lucy. *'Would I might be hang'd!*
Polly. *And I would so too!*
Lucy. *To be hang'd with you,*
Polly. *My dear, with you.*
Mac. *Oh, leave me to thought! I fear, I doubt!*
I tremble—I droop!—See, my courage is out
[Turns up the empty p[illegible]
Polly. *No token of love?*
Mac. *See, my courage is out!*
[Turns up the empty bottle
Lucy. *No token of love?*
Polly. *Adieu!*
Lucy. *Farewell!*
Mac. *But hark! I hear the toll of the bell.*
Chorus. *Tol de rol lol, &c.*

Gaoler. Four women more, Captain, with a child a-piece.—See, here they come!

Enter WOMEN *and* CHILDREN.

Mac. What! four wives more! this is too much—Here, tell the sheriff's officers I am ready. [*Exeunt.*

Mob. [*Within.*] A reprieve! a reprieve!

Enter MACHEATH, *&c.*

Mac. So, it seems, I am not left to my choice, but must have a wife at last—Look ye, my dears, we will have no controversy now—Let us give this day to mirth, and I am sure she, who thinks herself my wife, will testify her joy by a dance.

All. Come, a dance! a dance!

Mac. Ladies, I hope you will give me leave to present a partner to each of you: and (if I may without offence) for this time, I take Polly for mine—and for life, you slut, for we are really married—As for the rest—But, at present, keep your own secret. [*To* POLLY.

A DANCE.

AIR.

"Lumps of pudding," &c.

Thus, I stand like a Turk, and his doxies around,
From all sides, their glances his passion confound;
For black, brown, and fair, his inconstancy burns,
And the different beauties subdue him by turns:
Each calls forth her charms, to provoke his desires,
Though willing to all, but with one he retires:
Then think of this maxim, and put off all sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

CHORUS.

Then think of this maxim, &c. [Exeunt omnes.

THE END.

Painted by Singleton. *Published by Longman & Co March 1816.* *Engr*

THE

MAN OF THE WORLD;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY CHARLES MACKLIN.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.

REMARKS.

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nedy was written by a man of that pecu-
f body and mind, which enabled him to
inst the sickness of the one, and the sor-
other, for the period of near a hundred

was born in Ireland at the very beginning
century, and died in England at the close
occupation throughout his long life was
ctor; though chance, more than inclina-
ed his steps towards the stage.
rmance of the Jew, in "The Merchant of
as so perfect a representation of malignant
ire; so congenial were the countenance
s he gave to this black character, which
's genius formed, that every other part, in
peared, is seemingly forgotten, in the mi-
ibrance of all he did in Shylock.
author of this comedy had a capacious
ing, this production, as well as his skill as
ill testify. His "Man of the World" could
tten by one, capable of making the nicest
s on all he saw there. It is an excellent
liticians and courtiers. Sir Pertinax is the

spirit of Lord Chesterfield, embodied, and
to view as an example to shun, instead of a p
imitate ; whilst his son speaks sentiments, of
mon-place truth, but such as are rarely c
either in fictitious or real characters, though
such as every honest heart will expand to
ledge.

This play was written many years befor
performed in London. It first appeared in
where it was well received; but reasons of a
nature advised a delay in bringing it before a
audience, that events might perhaps arise i
ministration of public affairs, so as to favou
than injure, its reception.

The elevation of Mr Pitt to the high office
minister—from which occurrence it was co
expected, that all ancient failings in that h
department would cease, and ministerial rege
ensue—this seemed the happy era for " The
the World," to be introduced on the stage of
tropolis. To hold up to detestation vices,
longer to be tolerated, could give offence to
at least to none in power to resent the affro

The temper of the times was accurately es
and this drama, after encountering some va
from a dissatisfied minority, was finally estal
favourite with the whole town.

Yet the opposition on the first night of its
ance was so violent in some scenes, whilst th
ers of the new minister were such enthusiast
rers of those very parts which gave displeas

plaudits and counter-plaudits lengthened the time of performance nearly till midnight, before the ayes and the noes became all of one mind. This wished-for agreement was effected by the following line in the epilogue; which, after dwelling on the author's great age, and how much he was esteemed in his younger days, adds—

"Then shield your father's favourite to the last."

On this sacred appeal to the memory of their parents, all parties united, and the venerable author was hailed with shouts of triumph.

Macklin performed Sir Pertinax himself, and so excellently, that it was imagined he could never be surpassed by any other representative of this Scotch politician. Cooke, his successor, has proved the fallacy of this conjecture. Macklin performed Sir Pertinax most excellently; but Cooke performs Sir Pertinax with talents as pre-eminent, as Macklin displayed above all others in the character of Shylock.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD LUMBERCOURT	*Mr Waddy.*
SIR PERTINAX MACSYCOPHANT	*Mr Cooke.*
EGERTON	*Mr C. Kemble.*
MELVILLE	*Mr Murray.*
SERJEANT EITHERSIDE	*Mr Davenport.*
COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE	*Mr Beverly.*
SIDNEY	*Mr Brunton.*
TOMLINS	*Mr Abbot.*
SAM	*Mr Trueman.*
JOHN	*Mr Atkins.*
LADY RODOLPHA LUMBERCOURT	*Mrs Glover.*
LADY MACSYCOPHANT	*Miss Leserve.*
CONSTANTIA	*Miss Brunton.*
BETTY HINT	*Mrs Mattocks.*
NANNY	*Miss Cox.*

SCENE,—Sir Pertinax Macsycophant's House, ten miles from London.

THE

MAN OF THE WORLD.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Library.

Enter BETTY *and* FOOTMAN.

Betty. The postman is at the gate, Sam, pray step and take in the letters.

Sam. John the gardener is gone for them, Mrs Betty.

Betty. Bid John bring them to me, Sam; tell him, I'm here in the library.

Sam. I will send him to your ladyship in a crack, madam. [*Exit* SAM.

Enter NANNY.

Nanny. Miss Constantia desires to speak to you, Mistress Betty.

Betty. How is she now, Nanny? Any better?

Nanny. Something—but very low-spirited still. I verily believe it is as you say.

Betty. Nay, I would take my oath of it, I cannot be deceived in that point, Nanny. Ay, she is certainly breeding, depend upon it.

Nanny. Why, so the housekeeper thinks too.

Betty. Oh, if she is not, there is no bread in nine loaves; nay, I know the father, the man that ruined her.

Nanny. The deuce you do!

Betty. As sure as you are alive, Nanny, or I am greatly deceived—And yet I can't be deceived neither.—Was not that the cook that came galloping so hard over the common just now?

Nanny. The same; how very hard he galloped! he has been but three quarters of an hour, he says, coming from Hyde Park Corner!

Betty. And what time will the family be down?

Nanny. He has orders to have dinner ready by five. There are to be lawyers, and a great deal of company here—He fancies there is to be a private wedding to-night between our young Master Charles and Lord Lumbercourt's daughter, the Scotch Lady; who, he says, is just come from Bath, on purpose to be married to him.

Betty. Ay, Lady Rodolpha! nay, like enough, for I know it has been talked of a good while—Well, go tell Miss Constantia, that I will be with her immediately.

Nanny. I shall, Mrs Betty. [*Exit* NANNY.

Betty. So! I find they all begin to suspect her condition: that's pure; it will soon reach my lady's ears, I warrant.

Enter JOHN, *with Letters.*

Well, John, ever a letter for me?

John. No, Mrs Betty; but here's one for Miss Constantia.

Betty. Give it me—hum—My lady's hand.

John. And here is one, which the postman says is for my young master—But it is a strange direction. [Reads.] *To Charles Egerton, Esq.*

Betty. Oh, yes, yes!—that is for Master Charles,

John; for he has dropped his father's name of Macsycophant, and has taken up that of Egerton. The parliament has ordered it.

John. The parliament!—Pr'ythee why so, Mrs Betty?

Betty. Why you must know, John, that my lady, his mother, was an Egerton by her father; she stole a match with our old master. Sir Stanley Egerton, that you just mentioned, dying an old bachelor, and mortally hating our old master, and the whole gang of the Macsycophants—he left his whole estate to Master Charles, who was his godson; but on condition though that he should drop his father's name of Macsycophant, and take up that of Egerton, and that is the reason, John, why the parliament has made him change his name.

John. I am glad that Master Charles has got the estate, however; for he is a sweet-tempered gentleman.

Betty. As ever lived—But come, John, as I know you love Miss Constantia, and are fond of being where she is, I will make you happy—You shall carry her letter to her.

John. Shall I, Mrs Betty? I am very much obliged to you. Where is she?

Betty. In the housekeeper's room, settling the desert—Give me Mr Egerton's letter, and I will leave it on the table, in his dressing room.—I see it is from his brother, Sandy.—So, now go and deliver your letter to your sweetheart, John.

John. That I will; and I am much beholden to you for the favour of letting me carry it to her; for though she should never have me, yet I shall always love her, and wish to be near her, she is so sweet a creature—Your servant, Mrs Betty. [*Exit.*

Betty. Your servant, John, ha! ha! ha! poor fellow! He perfectly dotes on her; and daily follows her about, with nosegays and fruit—and the first of every thing in the season—Ay, and my young Master

Charles too, is in as bad a way as the garde
short, every body loves her, and that is one
why I hate her—for my part I wonder what th
the men see in her—A creature that was take
charity!—I am sure she is not so handsome.
she was out of the family once; if she was,
then stand a chance of being my lady's favou
self. Ay, and perhaps of getting one of m
masters for a sweetheart, or at least the chapla
as to him, there would be no such great ca
should get him. I will try for him, however,
first step shall be to let the doctor know all I k
covered about Constantia's intrigues with h
at Hadley—Yes, that will do; for the doct
to talk with me, and always smiles and jokes
and he loves to hear me talk—And I verily
he! he! he! that he has a sneaking kindness
and this story I know will make him have a g
nion of my honesty—And that, I am sure,
one step towards—Oh! bless me—here he c
and my young master with him——I'll watc
portunity to speak to him, as soon as he i
for I will blow her up, I am resolved, as gre
vourite, and as cunning as she is.

Enter EGERTON *and* SIDNEY.

Eger. I have done, sir,—You have refused
nothing more to say upon the subject—I am s

Sid. Come, come, correct this warmth, i
only weak ingredient in your nature; and yo
to watch it carefully. From your earliest you
father has honoured me with the care of you
tion, and the general conduct of your mi
however singular and morose his behaviour
towards others, to me he has ever been respe
liberal. I am now under his roof too—and b
will not abet an unwarrantable passion, in di
position to your father's hopes and happin
blame—you angrily break from me, and call me

Eger. Dear Sidney—for my warmth I stand condemned, but for my marriage with Constantia, I think I can justify it upon every principle of filial duty, honour, and worldly prudence.

Sid. Only make that appear, Charles, and you know you may command me.

Eger. I am sensible how unseemly it appears in a son, to descant on the unamiable passions of a parent; but as we are alone, and friends, I cannot help observing, in my own defence, that when a father will not allow the use of reason to any of his family;—when his pursuit of greatness makes him a slave abroad only to be a tyrant at home—and when merely to gratify his own ambition, he would marry his son into a family he detests—sure, Sidney, a son thus circumstanced (from the dignity of human nature, and the feelings of a loving heart) has a right—not only to protest against the blindness of the parent, but to pursue those measures that virtue and happiness point out.

Sid. The violent temper of Sir Pertinax, I own, cannot on many occasions be defended; but still your intended alliance with Lord Lumbercourt—

Eger. Oh! contemptible! a trifling, quaint, debauched, voluptuous, servile fool, the mere lackey of party and corruption, who for a mean, slavish, factious prostitution of near thirty years, and the ruin of a noble fortune, has had the despicable satisfaction, and the infamous honour, of being kicked up and kicked down—kicked in, and kicked out—just as the insolence, compassion, or the conveniency of leaders, predominated; and now—being forsaken by all parties,—his whole political consequence amounts to the power of franking a letter, and the right honourable privilege of not paying a tradesman's bill.

Sid. Well, but, dear Charles, you are not to wed my lord, but his daughter.

Sid. And yet, Charles, give me leave to observe, at Lady Rodolpha has a goodness of heart, and a nd of vivacity, that not only entertains, but, upon eing her two or three times, improves upon you, nd when her torrent of spirits abates, and she condescends to converse gravely—you really like her.

Eger. Why, ay; she is sprightly, good-humoured, has principles, and a good heart. But in a partner for life, Sidney (you know your own precept—your own judgment) affection, capricious in its nature, must have something, even in the external manners—— nay, in the very mode, not only of beauty but of virtue itself—which both heart and judgment must approve, or our happiness in that delicate point cannot be lasting.

Sid. I grant it.

Eger. And that mode, that amiable essential, I never can meet with—but in Constantia. You sigh!

Sid. No, I only wish that Constantia had a fortune equal to yours—but pray, Charles, suppose I had been so indiscreet as to have agreed to marry you to Constantia, would she have consented, think you?

Eger. That I cannot say positively; but I suppose so.

Sid. Did you never speak to her then upon that subject?

Eger. In general terms only: never directly requested her consent in form. But I will this very moment—for I have no asylum from my father's arbitrary design, but my Constantia's arms.—Pray do not stir from hence. I will return instantly.

[*Exit* EGERTON.

Sid. Poor Charles! he little dreams that I love Constantia too; but to what degree I knew not myself, till he importuned me to join their hands—Yes. I love, but must not be a rival; for he is dear to me as fraternal fondness—My benefactor, my friend!

Enter BETTY, *running up to him.*

Betty. I beg your worship's pardon for my int sion; I hope I do not disturb your reverence.

Sid. Not in the least, Mrs Betty.

Betty. I humbly beg pardon, sir—but I—I wanted to break my mind to your honour about a—a scruple—that—that lies upon my conscienc and indeed I should not have presumed to tro you—but that I know you are my young mast friend, and my old master's friend, and my la friend, and indeed a friend to the whole family—to give you your due, sir, you are as good a prea as ever went into a pulpit.

Sid. Ha! ha! ha! do you think so, Mrs Bet

Betty. Ay, in truth do I—and as good a gentle too as ever came into a family, and one that n gives a servant a hard word; nor that does any an ill turn—neither behind one's back, nor be one's face.

Sid. Ha! ha! ha! Why you are a mighty w spoken woman, Mrs Betty: and I am mightily holden to you for your good character of me.

Betty. Indeed, sir, it is no more than you dese and what all the servants say of you.

Sid. I am much obliged to them, Mrs Be But pray what are your commands with me?

Betty. Why, I will tell your reverence—to be I am but a servant, as a body may say; and every should stand upon its own bottom—but——

[*She takes hold of him familiarly, looking about very cautiously, and speaks in a familiar tone of great secrecy.*

My young master is now in the china-room—in conference with Miss Constantia. I know what are about—but that is no business of mine—and th *fore I* made bold to listen a little, because, you k

one would be sure—before one took away any y's reputation.

Sid. Very true, Mrs Betty—very true, indeed.

Betty. Oh! Heavens forbid that I should take away y young woman's good name, unless I had a reason r it!—but, sir—if I am in this place alive—as I lis- ened with my ear close to the door, I heard my young aster ask Miss Constantia the plain marriage ques- ion—Upon which I started—I trembled—nay, my ery conscience stirred within me so——that I could ot help peeping through the key-hole.

Sid. Ha! ha! ha! and so your conscience made ou peep through the key-hole, Mrs Betty?

Betty. It did indeed, your reverence. And there I saw my young master upon his knees—Lord bless us; kissing her hand, as if he would eat it! and pro- testing and assuring her, he knew that your worship would consent to the match. And then the tears ran down her cheeks as fast——

Sid. Ay!

Betty. They did indeed, sir;—I would not tell your reverence a lie for the world.

Sid. I believe it, Mrs Betty. And what did Con- stantia say to all this?

Betty. Oh! Oh! she is sly enough—She looks as if butter would not melt in her mouth—but all is not gold that glisters—smooth water, you know, runs deepest. I am sorry, very sorry, indeed—my young master makes himself such a fool—but——um!——ha!——take my word for it, he is not the man—for though she looks as modest as a maid at a christening——yet—a—when sweethearts meet—in the dusk of the evening—and stay together a whole hour——in the dark grove—and—a—aha! embrace—and kiss—and—weep at parting—why then—then, you know—ah! it is easy to guess all the rest.

Sid. Why, did Constantia meet any body in this manner?

Betty. Oh! Heavens! I beg your worship will not misapprehend me! for I assure you I do not believe they did any harm—that is—not in the grove——at least not when I was there—and she may be honestly married, for aught I know.—She may be very honest, for aught I know—Heaven forbid I should say any harm of her—I only say—that they did meet in the dark walk—and perhaps nine months hence—ay—remember, sir,—I said that—a—certain person in this family—nine months hence—may ask me to stand god-mother—only remember—for I think I know what's what—when I see it, as well as another.

Sid. No doubt you do, Mrs Betty—ha! ha! ha! no doubt on't.

Betty. I do indeed, sir; and so your servant, sir; [*Going, returns.*] but I hope your worship will not mention my name in this business;—or that you had any item from me about it.

Sid. I shall not, Mrs Betty.

Betty. For indeed, sir, I am no busy body, nor do I love tending or proving—and I assure you, sir, I hate all tittling and tattling—and gossiping, and backbiting—and taking away a person's character.

Sid. I observe you do, Mrs Betty.

Betty. I do indeed, sir;—I am the farthest from it of any person in the world.

Sid. I dare say you are.

Betty. I am indeed, sir; and so, sir, your humble servant.

Sid. Your servant, Mrs Betty.

Betty. So! I see he believes every word I say; that's charming—I will do her business for her, I am resolved. [*Aside.—Exit.*

Sid. What can this ridiculous creature mean by her dark walk?—I see envy is as malignant in a paltry waiting wench, as in the vainest, or the most ambitious lady of the court, It is always an infallible mark of the basest nature; and merit in the lowest, as in

the highest station, must feel the shafts of envy's constant agents—falsehood and slander.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir, Mr Egerton and Miss Constantia desire to speak with you in the china-room.

Sid. Very well, Sam. [*Exit* SAM.] I will not see them—what's to be done?—inform his father of his intended marriage!—no;—that must not be—for the overbearing temper and ambitious policy of Sir Pertinax would exceed all bounds of moderation. But this young man must not marry Constantia—I know it will offend him—no matter. It is our duty to offend, when the offence saves the man we love from a precipitate action.—Yes, I must discharge the duty of my function and a friend, though I am sure to lose the man whom I intend to serve. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Library.

Enter EGERTON *and* CONSTANTIA.

Con. Mr Sidney is not here, sir.

Eger. I assure you I left him here, and I begged that he would stay till I returned.

Con. His prudence, you see, sir, has made him re-

tire, therefore we had better defer the subject till h is present—In the mean time, sir, I hope you wil permit me to mention an affair that has greatly alarm ed and perplexed me. I suppose you guess what it is.

Eger. I do not, upon my word.

Con. That's a little strange—You know, sir, tha you and Mr Sidney did me the honour of breakfast ing with me this morning in my little study.

Eger. We had that happiness, madam.

Con. Just after you left me, upon my opening m book of accompts, which lay in the drawer of th reading desk, to my great surprise, I there found th case of jewels, containing a most elegant pair of ea rings, a necklace of great value, and two bank bi in this pocket-book, the mystery of which, sir, I pr sume you can explain.

Eger. I can.

Con. They were of your conveying, then?

Eger. They were, madam.

Con. I assure you they startled and alarmed m

Eger. I hope it was a kind alarm, such as blushe virtue feels, when with her hand she gives her he —and last consent.

Con. It was not, indeed, sir.

Eger. Do not say so, Constantia—come, be k at once; my peace and worldly bliss depend u this moment.

Con. What would you have me do?

Eger. What love and virtue dictate.

Con. Oh! sir—experience but too severely pro that such unequal matches as ours never produ aught but contempt and anger in parents, censu from the world—and a long train of sorrow and pentance in the wretched parties, which is but t often entailed upon their hapless issue.

Eger. But that, Constantia, cannot be our con tion; for my fortune is independent and ample, eq

to luxury and splendid folly; I have the right to chuse the partner of my heart.

Con. But I have not, sir.—I am a dependant on my lady—a poor, forsaken, helpless orphan. Your benevolent mother found me, took me to her bosom, and there supplied my parental loss with every tender care, indulgent dalliance, and with all the sweet persuasion that maternal fondness, religious precept, polished manners, and hourly example, could administer, she fostered me; [*Weeps.*] and shall I now turn viper, and with black ingratitude sting the tender heart, that thus has cherished me? Shall I seduce her house's heir, and kill her peace? No—though I loved to the mad extreme of female fondness; though every worldly bliss, that woman's vanity or man's ambition could desire, followed the indulgence of my love, and all the contempt and misery of this life the denial of that indulgence, I would discharge my duty to my benefactress, my earthly guardian, my more than parent.

Eger. My dear Constantia, your prudence, your gratitude, and the cruel virtue of your self-denial, do but increase my love, my admiration, and my misery.

Con. Sir, I must beg you will give me leave to return these bills and jewels.

Eger. Pray do not mention them; sure my kindness and esteem may be indulged, so far, without suspicion or reproach—I beg you will accept of them;—nay, I insist—

Con. I have done, sir,—my station here is to obey—I know they are the gifts of a virtuous mind, and mine shall convert them to the tenderest and most grateful use.

Eger. Hark! I hear a carriage—It is my father! dear girl, compose yourself,—I will consult Sidney and my lady, by their judgment we will be directed;—will that satisfy you?

Con. I can have no will but my lady's; with your

leave, I will retire—I would not see her in this confusion.

Eger. Dear girl, adieu! [*Exit* CONSTANTIA.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir Pertinax and my lady are come, sir, and my lady desires to speak with you in her own room—Oh! she is here, sir. [*Exit* SAM.

Enter LADY MACSYCOPHANT.

Lady Mac. Dear child, I am glad to see you; why did you not come to town yesterday, to attend the levee?—your father is incensed to the uttermost at your not being there!

Eger. Madam, it is with extreme regret I tell you, that I can no longer be a slave to his temper, his politics, and his scheme of marrying me to this woman. Therefore you had better consent, at once, to my going out of the kingdom, and to my taking Constantia with me; for without her, I never can be happy.

Lady Mac. As you regard my peace, or your own character, I beg you will not be guilty of so rash a step—you promised me you would never marry her without my consent. I will open it to your father: pray, dear Charles, be ruled—let me prevail.

Eger. Madam, I cannot marry this lady.

Lady Mac. Well, well; but do not determine. First patiently hear what your father and Lord Lumbercourt have to propose, and let me try to manage this business for you with your father—pray do, Charles.

Eger. Madam, I submit.

Lady Mac. And while he is in this ill humour, I beg you will not oppose him, let him say what he will. When his passion is a little cool, I will try to bring him to reason—but pray do not thwart him.

Sir Pert [*Without.*] Haud your gab, ye scoundrel, and do as you are bid. Zounds, ye are so full of your

gab. I say, let them take the chesnut gelding, return to town, and enquire what is become of my lord.

Lady Mac. Oh! here he comes; I'll get out of the way. [*Exit.*

Sir Pert. [*Without.*] Here you, Tomlins.

Tomlins. [*Without.*] Sir!

Sir Pert. [*Without.*] Where is my son, Egerton?

Tomlins. [*Without.*] In the library, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Pert. [*Without.*] Vary weel, the instant the lawyers come, let me ken it.

Enter SIR PERTINAX.

Sir Pert. Vary weel——vary weel——ah, ye are a fine fellow—what have ye to say for yoursel——are not ye a fine spark? are not ye a fine spark, I say? ——ah! you're a——so ye would not come up till the levee?

Eger. Sir, I beg your pardon—but—I—I—I was not very well;——besides—I did not think that—that my presence there was necessary.

Sir Pert. Sir, it was necessary—I tauld ye it was necessary—and, sir——I must now tell ye, that the whole tenor of your conduct is most offensive.

Eger. I am sorry you think so, sir. I am sure I do not intend to offend you.

Sir Pert. [*In anger.*] I care not what ye intend—sir, I tell ye, ye do offend—What is the meaning of this conduct?—neglect the levee!—'Sdeath! sir, your—what is your reason, I say, for thus neglecting the levee, and disobeying my commands?

Eger. Sir, I own——I am not used to levees:—nor do I know how to dispose of myself—nor what to say or do in such a situation.

Sir Pert. Zounds, sir! do ye not see what others do? gentle and simple; temporal and spiritual; lords, members, judges, generals, and bishops? aw crowding, bustling, pushing foremost intill the middle of the circle, and there, waiting, watching, and striving to

catch a luock, or a smile, fra the great mon; which they meet with an amicable risibility of aspect—a modest cadence of body—and a conciliating co-operation of the whole mon;—which—expresses an officious promptitude for his service, and indicates—that they luock upon themselves as the suppliant appendages of his power, and the inlisted Swiss of his poleetical fortune—this, sir, is what ye ought to do—and this, sir, is what I never once omitted for these five and tharty years,—let wha would be meenister.

Eger. [*Aside.*] Contemptible!

Sir Pert. What is that ye mutter, sir?

Eger. Only a slight reflection, sir; and not relative to you.

Sir Pert. Sir, your absenting yourself fra the levee at this juncture is suspeecious—it is luocked upon as a kind of disaffection: and aw your countrymen are highly offended with yeer conduct: for, sir, they do not luock upon ye, as a friend, or a weel-wisher, either to Scotland or Scotchmen.

Eger. Then, sir, they wrong me, I assure you; but pray, sir, in what particular can I be charged either with coldness, or offence to my country?

Sir Pert. Why, sir, ever since your mother's uncle, Sir Stanley Egerton, left ye this three thousand pounds a-year, and that ye have, in compliance with his will, taken up the name of Egerton, they think ye are grown proud,—that ye have estranged yoursal fra the Macsycophants—have associated with yeer mother's family—with the opposeetion—and with those, again I must tell you, wha do not wish weel till Scotland—besides, sir, in a conversation the other day, after dinner, at yeer cousin, Campbell Mac-Kenzie's, before a whole table full of yeer ain relations, did ye not publicly wish—a total extinguishment of aw party—and of aw national distinctions whatever, relative to the three kingdoms? And, ye blockhead—was that a *prudent* wish,—before sae many of yeer ain country-

men, and be damned to ye? Or, was it a filial language to hold before me?

Eger. Sir, with your pardon—I cannot think it unfilial, or imprudent; I own I do wish—most ardently wish, for a total extinction of all parties—particularly that of English, Irish, and Scotch might never more be brought into contest, or competition; unless, like loving brothers, in generous emulation for one common cause.

Sir Pert. How, sir; do ye persist?—what, would ye banish aw party—and aw distinction betwext English, Irish, and your ain countrymen?

Eger. I would, sir.

Sir Pert. Then damme, sir—ye are nae true Scot. Ay, sir; ye may luock as angry as ye wull; but again I say—ye are nae true Scot.

Eger. Your pardon, sir, I think he is the true Scot, and the true citizen, who wishes equal justice to the merit and demerit of every subject of Great Britain.—Amongst whom, sir, I know but of two distinctions.

Sir Pert. Weel, sir, and what are those? what are those? [*Impatiently.*

Eger. The knave, and——and the honest man.

Sir Pert. Pshaw! nonsense!

Eger. And he who makes any other—let him be of the north, or of the south, of the east, or of the west, in place, or out of place—is an enemy to the whole, and to the virtues of humanity.

Sir Pert. Ay, sir! this is your brother's impudent doctrine—for the which I have banished him for ever fra my presence, my heart, and my fortune—sir, I will have nae son of mine, because truly he has been educate in an English university, presume to speak against his native land—or against my principles. Sir, Scotsmen—Scotsmen, sir,—wherever they meet throughout the globe—should unite and stick together, as it were, in a poleetical phalanx. However—nae mair of that now, I will talk at large till

ye about that business anon; in the mean time, sir, notwithstanding your contempt of my advice, and your disobedience till my commands, I wool convince ye of my paternal attention till your welfare, by my management with this voluptuary—this Lord Lumbercourt, whose daughter ye are to marry:—ye ken, sir, that the fallow has been my patron above these five and tharty years.

Eger. True, sir.

Sir Pert. Vary weel—and now, sir, you see by his prodigality, he is become my dependant; and accordingly I have made my bargain with him—the deel a bawbee he has in the world but what comes through these clutches; for his whole estate, which has three impleecit boroughs upon it—mark—is now in my custody at nurse; the which estate, on my paying off his debts, and allowing him a life-rent of seven thousand per annum, is to be made over till me for my life; and at my death is to descend till ye and yeer issue—the peerage of Lumbercourt, ye ken, will follow of course—so, sir, you see there are three impleecit boroughs, the whole patrimony of Lumbercourt—and a peerage at one slap—why it is a stroke—a hit—a hit—a capital hit, mon.—Zounds! sir, a man may live a century, and not make sic another hit again!

Eger. It is a very advantageous bargain, no doubt sir; but what will my lord's family say to it?

Sir Pert. Why, mon, he cares not if his family were aw at the deel, so his luxury be but gratified—only let him have his race-horse, till feed his vanity—his polite blackiegs, to advise him in his matches on the turf, cards, and tennis; his harridan, till drin drams wee him, scrat his face, and burn his periwig when she is in her maudlin hysterics—the fallow has aw that he wants, and aw that he wishes, in the world——

Enter TOMLINS.

Tomlins. Lady Rodolpha is come, sir.

Sir Pert. And my lord?

Tomlins. No, sir, he is about a mile behind, the servant says.

Sir Pert. Let me know, the instant he arrives.

Tomlins. I shall, sir. [*Exit* TOMLINS.

Sir Pert. Step ye oot, Charles, and receive Lady Rodolpha. And I desire, sir, ye wool treat her with ass much respect and gallantry as possible—for my lord has hinted that you have been very remiss ass a lover. So go, go, and receive her.

Eger. I shall, sir.

Sir Pert. Vary weel—vary weel—a gude lad—go, go, and receive her, ass a lover should. [*Exit* EGERTON.] Ha! I must keep a tight hand upon this fallow, I see: a fine time o' day indeed for a blockhead to turn patriot—when the character is exploded, marked, proscribed; why the common people, the very vulgar, have found out the jest—and laugh at a patriot now-a-days just as they do at a conjuror, a magician, or any other impostor in society.

Enter TOMLINS *and* LORD LUMBERCOURT.

Tomlins. Lord Lumbercourt. [*Exit* TOMLINS.

Lord L. Sir Pertinax, I kiss your hand.

Sir Pert. Your lordship's most devoted—I rejoice to see you!

Lord L. You stole a march upon me, this morning!—gave me the slip, Mac; though I never wanted your assistance more in my life. I thought you would have called upon me.

Sir Pert. My dear lord, I beg ten millions of pardons, for leaving town before you—but ye ken that your lordship at dinner yesterday settled that we should meet this morning at the levee?

Lord L. That I acknowledge, Mac—I did promise to be there, I own—but——

Sir Pert. You did, indeed—and accordingly I was at the levee: and waited there till every mortal was

gone, and seeing you did na come, I concluded, that your lordship was gone before.

Lord L. To confess the truth, my dear Mac, that old sinner, Lord Freakish, General Jolly, Sir Anthony Soaker, and two or three more of that set—laid hold of me last night at the opera; and as the general says—I believe, by the intelligence of my head this morning—ha! ha! ha! we drank deep ere we departed—ha! ha! ha! and—

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! nay, if you were with that party, my lord, I don't wonder at not seeing your lordship at the levee!

Lord L. The truth is, Sir Pertinax, my fellow let me sleep too long for the levee. But I wish I had seen you before you left town—I wanted you dreadfully.

Sir Pert. I am heartily sorry, that I was not in the way: but on what account, my lord, did you want me?

Lord L. Ha! ha! ha! a cursed awkward affair—and—ha! ha! yet I cannot help laughing at it, neither, though it vexed me confoundedly.

Sir Pert. Vexed you, my lord—I wish I had been wi' ye then; but for Heaven's sake, my lord, what was it that could possibly vex your lordship?

Lord L. Why, that impudent, teasing, dunning rascal, Mahogany, my upholsterer—you know the fellow?

Sir Pert. Perfectly, my lord.

Lord L. The impudent scoundrel has sued me up to some infernal kind of a—something or other, in the law, which I think they call an execution!

Sir Pert. The rascal!

Lord L. Upon which, sir, the fellow—ha! ha! ha! I cannot help laughing at it—by way of asking pardon, ha! ha! ha! had the modesty to wait on me two or three days ago—to inform my *honour*, ha! ha! as he was pleased to dignify me—that the execution was now ready to be put in force against my *honour*, ha! ha! ha!—but that, out of respect to my *honour*, as he had taken a great deal of my *honour*'s money, he would

ot suffer his lawyer to serve it—till he had first in-
rmed my *honour*—because he was not willing to af-
ont my *honour!* ha! ha! ha!—a son of a whore!

Sir Pert. I never heard of so impudent a dog.

Lord L. Now, my dear Mac! ha! ha! as the scoun-
rel's apology was so very satisfactory, and his infor-
ation so very agreeable to my honour—I told him,
at in honour I could not do less than to order his
nour to be paid immediately.

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha!—vary weel—ye were as
mplaisant as the scoundrel, till the full, I think,
y lord.

Lord L. Ha! ha! ha! to the full; but you shall
ar—you shall hear, Mac—so, sir, with great com-
sure, seeing a smart oaken cudgel, that stood very
ndily in a corner of my dressing room, I ordered
o of my fellows to hold the rascal, and another to
he the cudgel, and return the scoundrel's civility
th a good drubbing, as long as the stick lasted!

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! admirable! as gude a stroke
humour as ever I heard of—and did they drub
m soundly, my lord?

Lord L. Oh! most liberally, ha! ha! ha! most
erally; and there, I thought the affair would have
ted, till I should think proper to pay the scoundrel
but this morning, sir, just as I was stepping into
y chaise—my servants all about me—a fellow call-
a tipstaff, stepped up, and begged the favour of my
tman, who thrashed the upholsterer, and the two
t held him, to go along with him upon a little bu-
ess to my Lord Chief Justice.

Sir Pert. The devil!

Lord L. And at the same instant I, in my turn,
s accosted by two other very civil scoundrels, who,
h a most insolent politeness, begged my pardon, and
ormed me, that I must not go into my own chaise!

Sir Pert. How, my lord! not intil your ain car-
ge!

Lord L. No, sir—for that they, by order of the sheriff, must seize it at the suit of a gentleman—one Mr Mahogany, an upholsterer.

Sir Pert. An impudent villain!

Lord L. It is all true, I assure you; so you see, my dear Mac, what a damned country this is to live in, where noblemen are obliged to pay their debts, just like merchants, coblers, peasants, or mechanics—Is not that a scandal, dear Mac, to a nation?

Sir Pert. My lord, it is not only a scandal, but a national grievance.

Lord L. Sir, there is not another nation in the world that has such a grievance to complain of. But, Mac—besides the chaise—this Mahogany scoundrel has seized upon the house too, that I furnished for the girl I took from the Opera.

Sir Pert. I never heard of sic an a scoundrel!

Lord L. Ay, but what concerns me most, I am afraid, my dear Mac, that the villain will send down to Newmarket, and seize my string of horses.

Sir Pert. Your string of horses! We must prevent that at all events:—that would be such a disgrace. I will dispatch an express to town directly, to put a stop till the scoundrel's proceedings,

Lord L. Pr'ythee do, my dear Sir Pertinax.

Sir Pert. Oh! it shall be done, my lord.

Lord L. Thou art an honest fellow, Sir Pertinax upon honour.

Sir Pert. Oh, my lord! 'tis my duty to oblige your lordship to the very utmost stretch of my abeelity.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tomlins. Colonel Toper presents his compliments to you, sir, and having no family down with him in the country, he and Captain Hardbottle, if not inconvenient, will do themselves the honour of taking a family dinner with you.

Pert. They are two of our militia officers; your lordship know them?

rd L. By sight only.

Pert. I am afraid, my lord, they will interrupt usiness.

rd L. Ha! ha! not at all—not at all—ha! ha! should like to be acquainted with Toper, they is a fine jolly fellow!

Pert. Oh! very jolly, and very clever. He he captain, my lord, are reckoned two of the st drinkers in the country.

rd L. Ha! ha! ha! so I have heard—let us have by all means, Mac; they will enliven the scene v far are they from you?

Pert. Just across the meadows—not half a my lord—a step—a step.

rd L. Oh, let us have the jolly dogs, by all s!

Pert. My compliments, I shall be proud of company. [*Exit* Tomlins.] Guif ye please, my we wull gang and chat a bit wee the women. I not seen Lady Rodolpha since she returned fra ath, I long to have a little news from her, aboot ompany there.

rd L. O! she'll give you an account of them, arrant you. [*A very loud laugh without.*] Here arebrain comes! it must be her, by the noise.

dy Rod. [*Without.*] Allons! gude folks follow sans ceremonie!

r Lady Rodolpha, Lady Macsycophant, Egerton, *and* Sidney.

dy Rod. [*Running up to* Sir Pertinax] Sir nax—your most devoted—most obsequious, and obedient vassal. [*Courtesies very low.*

Pert. Lady Rodolpha—down till the ground ongratulations, duty, and affection, sincerely at- your ladyship. [*Bowing ridiculously low.*

Lady Rod. Oh! Sir Pertinax—your humeelity is most sublimely complaisant—at present unanswerable—but, sir, I shall intensely study to return it, [*Courtesies very low.*] fafty fold.

Sir Pert. Weel, madam, ha!—you louck gaily—weel and how—how is your ladyship, after your jaunt till the Bath?

Lady Rod. Never better, Sir Pertinax—as well as youth, health, riotous spirits, and a careless, happy heart can make me.

Sir Pert. I am mighty glad till hear it, my lady.

Lord L. Ay, ay,—Rodolpha is always in spirits, Sir Pertinax. "*Vive la bagatelle,*" is the philosophy of our family, ha!—Rodolpha,—ha!

Lady Rod. Traith is it, my lord: and upon honour, I am determined it never shall be changed, by my consent—weel I vow—ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! Vive la bagatelle would be a most brilliant motto for the chariot of a belle of fashion—what say ye till my fancy, Lady Macsycophant?

Lady Mac. It would have novelty at least to recommend it, madam.

Lady Rod. Which of aw charms is the most delightful that can accompany wit, taste, love, or friendship—for novelty, I take to be the true je ne scaquoi, of all worldly bliss. Cousin Egerton, should no you like to have a wife with Vive la bagatelle upon her wedding chariot?

Eger. Oh! certainly, madam.

Lady Rod. Yes—I think it would be quite out of the common, and singularly ailegant.

Eger. Indisputably, madam—for, as a motto is a word to the wise, or rather a broad hint to the whole world, of a person's taste and principles, Vive la bagatelle would be most expressive, at first sight, of your ladyship's characteristic!

Lady Rod. Oh, Maister Egerton! you touch my very heart, wi your approbation—ha! ha! ha! that

ie vary spirit of my intention, the instant I com-
ence bride. Well, I am immensely proud, that my
ncy has the approbation of so sound an understand-
g—so sublime a genius—and so polished, nay, so
tquisite, a taste, as that of the all-accomplished Mr
gerton.

Sir Pert. But, Lady Rodolpha, I wish till ask your
dyship some questions aboot the company at Bath;
ey say ye had aw the world there.

Lady Rod. O, yes;—there was a vary grate mob
deed: but vary little company: aw canaille—ex-
pt our ain party; the place was quite crooded wi
ur little purse-prood mechanics—an odd kind of
eer-luocking animals, that ha started intil fortunes
ı lottery tickets, rich prizes at sea, gambling in
ıange Alley, and sic like caprices of fortune, and
'a they aw crood till the Bath, to larn genteelity,
d the names, titles, intrigues, and bon mots of us
ople of fashion—ha! ha! ha!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Lord L. Ha! ha! ha! I know them—I know the
ings you mean, my dear, extremely well—I have
bserved them a thousand times; and wondered
here the devil they all came from! ha! ha! ha!

Lady Mac. Pray, Lady Rodolpha, what were your
versions at Bath?

Lady Rod. Gude faith, my lady, the company were
y diversion—and better nai human follies ever af-
rded—ha! ha! ha! sic an'a maxture—and sic od-
ties, ha! ha! ha! a perfect galimowfry? ha! ha!
ı! Lady Kunigunda Mac Kensie and I used to gang
oot till every part of this human chaos, ha! ha! on
urpose till reconnoitre the monsters, and pick up
eir frivolities, ha! ha! ha! ha!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! why, that must have been
high entertainment till your ladyship!

Lady Rod. Superlative, and inexhaustible, Sir

Pertinax! ha! ha! ha! Madam, we had in yane group a peer and a sharper—a duchess and a pin-maker's wife—a boarding-school miss and her grandmother—a fat parson, a lean general, and a yellow admiral—ha! ha! all speaking together, and bawling, and fretting, and fuming, and wrangling, and retorting in fierce contention, as if the fame, and the fortune, of aw the parties were till be the issue of the conflict.

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, madam, what was the object of their furious contantion?

Lady Rod. Oh! a vary important one, I assure you, Sir Pertinax; of no less consequence, madam, than how an odd trick at whist was lost, or might have been saved!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Lady Rod. In another party, Sir Pertinax, we had what was called the cabinet council; which was composed of a duke, and a haberdasher; a red-hot patriot, and a sneering courtier; a discarded statesman, and his scribbling chaplain; wi a busy, bawling, muckle-heeded prerogative lawyer—All of whom were every minute ready to gang together by the lugs, aboot the in and the oot meenistry, ha! ha! ha!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! weel, that was a droll motley cabinet, I vow. Vary whimsical, upon honour; but they are aw great politeecians at Bath, and settle a meenistry there with ass much ease ass they do a tune for a country dance!

Lady Rod. Then, Sir Pertinax, in a retired part of the room—snug—in a bye corner—in close conference, we had a Jew and a beeshop.

Sir Pert. A Jew and a beeshop! ha! ha! a deeelish gude connexion that; and pray, my lady, what were they aboot?

Lady Rod. Why, sir, the beeshop was striving to convert the Jew; while the Jew, by intervals, was sli

icking up intelligence fra the beeshop, aboot the hange in the meenistry, in hopes of making a stroke ı the stocks.

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! admirable, admirable, I onour the smouse—hah!—it was deevilish clever of m, my lord, deevilish clever.

Lord L. Yes, yes, the fellow kept a sharp look-it; I think it was a fair trial of skill on both sides, r Egerton.

Eger. True, my lord, but the Jew seems to have en in the fairer way to succeed.

Lord L. Oh! all to nothing, sir; ha! ha! ha! ell, child, I like your Jew, and your bishop much it is monstrous clever, let us have the rest of the story, pray, my dear.

Lady Rod. Gude traith, my lord, the sum total is, at there we aw danced, and wrangled, and flatter-l, and slandered, and gambled, and cheated, and ingled, and jumbled—and wolloped together.

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Lord L. Well, you are a droll girl, Rodolpha, and, pon honour, ha! ha! ha!—you have given us as himsical a sketch as ever was hit off. What say ou, Mr Sidney?

Sid. Upon my word, my lord, the lady has made ne see the whole assembly at Bath, in glaring, plea-ing, distinct colours!

Lady Rod. O, dear, Maister Sidney, your appro-ation makes me as vain as a reigning toast at her ookipg-glass.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tomlins. Colonel Toper and Captain Hardbottle re come, sir.

Sir Pert. O, vary weel! dinner immediately.

Tomlins. It is ready, sir. [*Exit* TOMLINS.

Sir Pert. My lord, we attend your lordship.

Lord L. Lady Mac, your ladyship's hand, if please. [*He leads her*

Sir Pert. Lady Rodolpha, here is an Arca swain, that has a hand at your ladyship's devoti

Lady Rod. And I, Sir Pertinax, ha yean at h [*Gives her Hand to* EGERTON.] there, sir,—a hearts—ye ken, cousin, they are nae brought the account o' human dealings now-a-days.

Eger. Oh! madam, they are mere temporary bles, especially in courtship; and no more to be pended upon, than the weather—or a lottery tic

Lady Rod. Ha! ha! ha! twa excellent seemi I vow, Mr Egerton, excellent!—for they illustrate vagaries, and inconstancy of my dissapated heart exactly—ass if ye had meant till describe it.

[EGERTON *leads her*

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! what a vast fund of s rits, and good humour, she has, Maister Sidney

Sid. A great fund, indeed, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Pert. Hah! by this time to-morrow, Mai Sidney, I hope wee shall ha every thing ready for to put the last helping hand till the earthly happi o' your friend and pupil; and then, sir, my cares be over for this life; for ass till my other son, I pect nae gude of him; nor should I grieve, we to see him in his coffin.—But this match—Oh wull make me the happiest of aw human beings.

[*Exe*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Library.

Enter SIR PERTINAX *and* EGERTON.

r *Pert.* Sir, I wull not hear a word aboot it ;—I
upon it ye are wrong—ye should ha paid your
till my lord, and not ha scrupled swallowing a
er or twa—or twanty, to oblige him !
er. Sir, I did drink his toast in a bumper.
Pert. Yas, ye did ; but how ?—how ?—just ass
s bairn takes pheesic, wi wry mouths, and sour
whach my lord observed ; then, to mend the
r, the moment that he and the colonel got intill
nken dispute about releegion, ye slily slunged

er. I thought, sir, it was time to go, when my
nsisted upon half-pint bumpers ?
Pert. Sir, that was not levelled at you—but at
olonel, the captain, and the commissioner, in
till try their bottoms ; but they aw agreed that
d I should drink oot o' smaw glasses.
r. But, sir, I beg pardon—I did not chus to
any more.
Pert. But, sir, I tell you there was necessity
ur drinking more, at this particular juncture
r. A necessity ! in what respect, sir ?
Pert. Why, sir, I have a certain point to carry,
endent of the lawyers, with my lord, in this

agreement of your marriage, aboot whach, I am afraid we shall ha a warm crooked squabble—and therefor I wanted your assistance in it.

Eger. But how, sir, could my drinking contribut to assist you in your squabble?

Sir Pert. Yas, sir, it would ha contributed—i might have prevented the squabble.

Eger. How so, sir?

Sir Pert. Why, sir, my lord is prood of ye for son-in-law, and of your little French songs—your st ries, and your bon mots, when ye are in the humo —and guin ye had but staid, and been a leetle joll and drank half a score bumpers wi him, till he g a little tipsy, I am sure when we had him i' that ti sy mood, we might ha settled the point among ourselves, before the lawyers came—but noow, sir; dinna ken what will be the consequence.

Eger. But when a man is intoxicated, would th have been a seasonable time to settle business, sir

Sir Pert. The most seasonable, sir, the most se sonable; for, sir, when my lord is in his cups, his su peecion and his judgment are baith asleep, and h heart is aw jollity, fun, and gude fellowship—yo may then mould his consent to any thing, and ca there be a happier moment than that for a bargain, to settle a dispute wi' a friend?—What is it you shru your shoulders at, sir?

Eger. At my own ignorance, sir: for I understan neither the philosophy nor the morality of your do trine.

Sir Pert. I know ye do not, sir:—and what warse, ye never wull understand it, ass ye procee In yean word, Charles—I ha often tauld ye, and noo again I tell ye yeance for aw, that every man shou be a man o' the warld, and should understand the do trine of pleeabeelity; for, sir, the manœuvres of ple abeelity are ass necessary to rise in the warld, a wrangling, and logical subtlety are to rise at the b

why ye see, sir, I ha acquired a noble fortune, a princely fortune, and hoow do ye think I ha raised it?

Eger. Doubtless, sir, by your abilities.

Sir Pert. Dootless, sir, ye are a blockhead—nai, sir, I'll tell ye hoow I raised it, sir; I raised it by boowing; by boowing, sir; I never in my life could stond straight i' th' presence of a great mon; but awways boowed, and boowed, and boowed, as it were by instinct.

Eger. How do you mean, by instinct, sir?

Sir Pert. Hoow do I mean, by instinct—why, sir, I mean by—by—by the instinct of interest, sir, whach is the univarsal instinct of mankind, sir; it is wonderful to think, what a cordial, what an amicable, nay, what an infallible influence, boowing has upon the pride and vanity of human nature. Charles, answer me sincerely, ha ye a mind till be convinced of the force of my doctrine, by example, and demonstration?

Eger. Certainly, sir.

Sir Pert. Then, sir, as the greatest favour I can confer upon ye, I wull give ye a short sketch of the stages of my boowing; ass an excitement, and a landmark for ye till boow by, and ass an infallible nostrum, for a mon o' the warld till thrive i' the warld.

Eger. Sir, I shall be proud to profit by your experience.

Sir Pert. Vary weel. [*They both sit down.*] And noow, sir, ye must recall till your thoughts, that your grandfather was a mon, whose penurious income of half-pay was the sum total of his fortune; and, sir, aw my proveesion fra him was a modicum of Latin, an expartness of areethmetic, and a short system of worldly counsel, the chief ingredients of which were, a persevering industry, a reegid economy, a smooth tongue, a pliabeelety of temper, and a constant attention till make every mon weel pleased wi himself.

Eger. Very prudent advice, sir.

Sir Pert. Therefore, sir, I lay it before ye—ne sir, wi these materials, I set oot, a rough raw-bone stripling, fra the north, till try my fortune wi the here i' the south; and my first step intill the worl was a beggarly clerkship in Sawney Gordon's comp ing house, here in th' city of London, whach, you' say, afforded but a barren sort of a prospect.

Eger. It was not a very fertile one, indeed, sir.

Sir Pert. The revearse, the revearse. Weel, si seeing mysel in this unprofitable situation, I reflecte deeply, I cast aboot my thoughts, and concluded th a matrimonial adventure, prudently conducted, wou be the readiest gait I could gang for the bettering my condeetion, and accordingly, I set aboot it—noo sir, in this pursuit—beauty—beauty, ah! beauty oft struck mine e'en, and played aboot my heart, a fluttered, and beet, and knocked, and knocked, b the deel an entrance I ever let it get—for I observe that beauty is generally, a proud, vain, saucy, e pensive sort of a commodity.

Eger Very justly observed, sir.

Sir Pert. And therefore, sir, I left it to prodige and coxcombs, that could afford till pay for it, and its stead, sir,—mark—I loucked oot for an ancie weel-jointured, superannuated dowager:—a co sumptive, toothless, phtisicky, wealthy widow—or, shreeveled, cadaverous, neglected piece of deformit i' th' shape of an ezard, or an ampersi-and—or, short, any thing, any thing, that had the siller, t siller; for that was the north star of my affection- do ye take me, sir? Was na that right?

Eger. O doubtless, doubtless, sir.

Sir Pert. Noow, sir; where do ye think I gang to louck for this woman, wi' th' siller—nai, till cou —nai, till play-houses, or assemblies—nai, sir, I gan ed till the kirk, till the anabaptists, independent, Bra leonian, Muggletonian meetings; till the morning an evening service of churches, and chapels of ease; an

till the midnight, melting, conciliating, love-feasts of the methodists—and there at last, sir, I fell upon an old, rich, sour, slighted, antiquated, musty maiden, that loucked—ha! ha! ha! she loucked just like a skeleton, in a surgeon's glass-case—noow, sir, this meeserable object was releegiously angry wi' hersel, and aw the warld, had nai comfort but in a supernatural releegious, enthusiastic, deleerium; ha! ha! ha! sir, she was mad—mad ass a bedlamite.

Eger. Not improbable, sir, there are numbers of poor creatures in the same enthusiastic condition.

Sir Pert. Oh! numbers, numbers; now, sir, this poor, cracked, crazy creature, used to sing, and sigh, and groan, and weep, and wail, and gnash her teeth, constantly, morning, and evening, at the tabernacle. And ass soon ass I found she had the siller, aha! gude trath, I plumped me doon upo', down close by her, cheek by jole, and sung, and sighed, and groaned, as vehemently as she could do for the life of her: ay, and turned up the whites of my e'en, till the strings awmost cracked again: I watched her attentively, handed her till her chair; waited on her hame; got most releegiously intimate wi' her in a week; married her in a fortnight; buried her in a month; touched the siller; and wi' a deep suit of mourning, a sorrowful veesage, and a joyful heart, I began the warld again; and this, sir, was the first effectual boow, I ever made till the vanity of human nature; boow, sir, do ye understand this doctrine?

Eger. Perfectly well, sir.

Sir Pert. My next boow, sir, was till your ane mother, whom I ran away wi' frai the boarding school, by the interest of whose family I got a gude smart place i' th' treasury: and, sir, my vary next step was intill parliament, the whach I entered wi' as ardent and ass determined an ambeetion, ass ever ageetated the heart o' Cæsar himsel. Sir, I boowed, and watched, and attended, and dangled upo' the then great

mon, till I got intill the vary bowels of his confidence —hah! got my snack of the clothing, the foraging, the contracts, the lottery tickets, and aw the poleetical bonuses: till at length, sir, I became a much wealthier mon than one half of the golden calves, I had been so long a boowing to. [*He rises*, EGERTON *rises too.*] And was na that boowing to some purpose, sir, ha?

Eger. It was, indeed, sir.

Sir Pert. But are ye convinced of the gude effects and of the uteelity of boowing?

Eger. Thoroughly, sir, thoroughly.

Sir Pert. Sir, it is infallible—but, Chairles, ah! while I was thus boowing, and raising this princely fortune, ah! I met many heart sores, and disappointments, fra the want of leeterature, ailoquence, and other popular abeelities: sir, guin I could but ha' spoken i' th' house, I should ha' done the deed in half the time: but the instant I opened my mouth, there, they aw fell a-laughing at me: aw which defeeciencies, sir, I determined at any expense till have supplied by the polish'd education of a son, who, I hoped, would yean day raise the house of Macsycophant till the highest pinnacle of ministeerial ambeetion; this, sir, is my plan: I ha' done my part of it. Nature has done hers, ye are ailoquant, ye are popular; aw parties like ye; and noow, sir, it only remains for ye to be directed—completion follows.

Eger. Your liberality, sir, in my education, and the judicious choice you made of the worthy gentleman, to whose virtue and abilities you entrusted me, are obligations I ever shall remember with the deepest filial gratitude.

Sir Pert. Vary weel, sir—vary weel—but, Chairles, ha' ye had any conversation yet wi' Lady Rodolpha, aboot the day of yeer marriage, yeer leeveries, yeer equipage, or yeer establishment?

Eger. Not yet, sir.

Sir Pert. Pah! why there again now, there again, ye are wrang; vary wrang.

Eger. Sir, we have not had an opportunity.

Sir Pert. Why, Chairles, ye are very tardy in this business.

Lord Lumbercourt. [*Singing without.*] *What have we with day to do? &c.*

Sir Pert. Oh! here comes my lord!

Lord Lumbercourt. [*Singing without.*] *Sons of care, 'twas made for you.*

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT, *drinking a Dish of Coffee,* TOMLINS *waiting, with a Salver in his Hand.*

Sons of care, 'twas made for you.

Very good coffee, indeed, Mr Tomlins.

Sons of care, 'twas made for you.

Here, Mr Tomlins. [*Gives him the Cup.*

Tomlins. Will your lordship please to have another dish?

Lord L. No more, Mr Tomlins. [*Exit* TOMLINS.] Well, my host of the Scotch pints! we have had warm work.

Sir Pert. Yes, you pushed the bottle aboot, my lord, wi' the joy and veegour of a bacchanal.

Lord L. That I did, my dear Mac—no loss of time with me—I have but three motions, old boy, charge!—toast!—fire!—and off we go—ha! ha! ha! that's my exercise.

Sir Pert. And fine warm exercise it is, my lord, especially with the half-pint glass.

Lord L. It does execution point blank—ay, ay, none of your pimping acorn glasses for me, but your manly old English half-pint bumpers, my dear—Zounds, sir! they try a fellow's stamina at once. But where's Egerton?

Sir Pert. Just at hand, my lord; there he stands, loucking at your lordship's picture.

Lord L. My dear Egerton!

Eger. Your lordship's most obedient.

Lord L. I beg your pardon, I did not see you—I am sorry you left us so soon after dinner; had you staid, you would have been highly entertained. I have made such examples of the commissioner, the captain, and the colonel!

Eger. So I understand, my lord.

Lord L. But, Egerton, I have slipped from the company, for a few moments, on purpose to have a little chat with you. Rodolpha tells me she fancies there is a kind of demur on your side, about your marriage with her.

Sir Pert. A demur? hoow so, my lord?

Lord L. Why, as I was drinking my coffee with the women, just now, I desired they would fix the wedding night, and the etiquette of the ceremony; upon which the girl burst into a loud laugh, telling me she supposed I was joking, for that Mr Egerton had never yet given her a single glance, or hint upon the subject.

Sir Pert. My lord, I have been just this vary instant talking to him aboot his shyness to the lady.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tomlins. Counsellor Plausible is come, sir, and Serjeant Eitherside.

Sir Pert. Why, then, we can settle this business this vary evening, my lord.

Lord L. As well as in seven years—and, to make the way as short as possible, pray, Mr Tomlins, present your master's compliments and mine to Lady Rodolpha, and let her ladyship know we wish to speak to her directly. [*Exit* TOMLINS.] He shall attack her this instant, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! ay! that's axcellent, this is doing business effectually, my lord!

Lord L. Oh! I will pit them in a moment, Sir Pertinax—that will bring them into the heat of the

ction at once; and save a deal of awkwardness on oth sides—Oh, here your dulcinea comes, sir!

Enter LADY RODOLPHA.

Lady Rod. Weel, Sir Pertinax, I attend your commands, and yours, my paternal lord. [*She courtesies.*

Lord L. Why then, my filial lady, we are to inorm you, that the commission for your ladyship, and his enamoured cavalier, commanding you jointly nd inseparably to serve your country, in the hoourable and forlorn hope of matrimony, is to be igned this very evening.

Lady Rod. This evening, my lord?

Lord L. This evening, my lady: come, Sir Pertiax, let us leave them to settle their liveries, weding suits, carriages, and all their amorous equipage or the nuptial camp.

Sir Pert. Ha! ha! ha! axcellent weel! I voow, ny lord, ye are a great officer: this is as gude a nanœuvre to bring on a rapid engagement, as the iblest general of them aw could ha started.

Lord L. Ay, ay; leave them together, they'll soon come to a right understanding, I warrant you, or the ieedle and the loadstone have lost their sympathy.

Eger. [*Aside.*] What a dilemma am I in!

[*Exeunt* LORD LUMBERCOURT *and* SIR PERTINAX.

Lady Rod. Why, this is downright tyranny—it has quite damped my spirits, and my betrothed yonder seems planet-struck too, I think.

Eger. [*Aside.*] A whimsical situation mine!

Lady Rod. [*Aside.*] Ha! ha! ha! methinks we ouck like a couple of cawtious geenerals, that are obliged till take the field, but neither of us seems willing to come till action.

Eger. [*Aside.*] I protest, I know not how to address her.

Lady Rod. He wull nai advance, I see—what am

I to do i' this affair? gude traith, I wull even do, suppose many brave heroes ha done before me; a gude face upo' the matter, and so conceal an ac heart, under a swaggering countenance. [*As*
Sir, sir, ass we ha. by the commands of our fathers—a business of some little consequence transact—I hope ye wull excuse my taking the berty of recomending a chair till ye.

[*Courtesies very*

Eger. [*Greatly embarrassed.*] Madam, I beg pardon. [*Hands her a Chair, then one for him*
Please to sit, madam. [*They sit a*

Lady Rod. [*Aside.*] Aha! he's resolved nc come too near till me, I think.

Eger. [*Aside.*] A pleasant interview—hem! h

Lady Rod. [*Aside.*] Hem! hem! [*Mimics him.*
wull not open the congress, I see; then I wull. [*loud.*] Come, sir, whan wull ye begin?

Eger. [*Starts.*] Begin! what, madam?

Lady Rod. To make love till me.

Eger. Love, madam?

Lady Rod. Ay, love, sir; why, you ha never s word till me yet upo' the subject; nor cast a s glance at me, nor brought forth one tender sigh even yeance secretly squeezed my loof. Now thof oor fathers are so tyrannical, ass to dispo us merely for their ain interests, without a s thought of oor hearts or affections; yet, sir, I ye ha mair humanity than to think of wedding without first admeenistering some o' th' prelec ries usual on those occasions?

Eger. Madam, I own your reproach is just: I therefore no longer disguise my sentiments, bu ly let you know my heart—

Lady Rod. Ah! ye are right, ye are right, cc Honourably and affectionately right—noow tl what I like of aw things in my swain—ay, ay, sin, open your heart frankly to me, ass a true

should; but sit ye doown, sit ye doown again, I shall return your frankness and your passion, cousin, wi' a melting tenderness, equal to the amorous enthusiasm of an ancient heroine.

Eger. Madam, if you will hear me——

Lady Rod. But remember ye must begin yeer address wi' fervency, and a most rapturous vehemence; or ye are to conseeder, cousin, that oor match is na till arise fra the union of hearts, and a long decorum of ceremonious courtship, but is instantly till start at yeance, out of necessity, or mere accident, ha! ha! ha! just like a match in an ancient romance, where, ye ken, cousin, the knight and the damsel are mutually smitten, and dying for each other at first sight; or by an amorous sympathy, before they exchange a single glance,

Eger. Dear madam, you entirely mistake.

Lady Rod. So noow, cousin, wi' the true romantic enthusiasm, ye are till suppose me the lady o' th' enchanted castle, and ye—ha! ha! ha! ye are to be the knight o' the sorrowful countenance, ha! ha! ha! and, upon honour, ye louck the character admirably, ha! ha!

Eger. Trifling creature!

Lady Rod, Nay, nay, nay, cousin, guin ye do na begin at yeance, the lady o' the enchanted castle wull vanish in a twankling.

Eger. [*Rises.*] Lady Rodolpha, I know your talent for raillery well; but at present, in my case, there is a kind of cruelty in it.

Lady Rod. Raillery! upon my honour, cousin, ye mistake me quite and clean. I am serious; vary serious; ay, and I have cause till be serious: ay, and vary sad intill the bargain [*Rises.*] nay, I wull submit my case even till yoursel—can any poor lassie be in a mair lamentable condeetion [*Whining.*] than to be sent four hundred miles, by the commands of a positive grandmother, till marry a man, who, I find, has

na mair affection for me, than if I had been his these seven years?

Eger. Madam, I am extremely sorry—

Lady Rod. But it is vary weel, cousin—vary ——I see your aversion plain enough—and, I must tell ye fairly, ye are the ainly mon that slighted my person, or that drew tears fra these e but its vary weel [*Cries.*] I wull return till Sco to-morrow morning, and let my grandmother l hoow I have been affronted by your slights, contempts, and your aversions.

Eger. If you are serious, madam, your di gives me a deep concern; but affection is not i power: and when you know that my heart is coverably given to another woman, I think you derstanding, and good nature, will not only p my past coldness and neglect of you, but forgiv when I tell you, I never can have that honour is intended me, by a connection with your lad

Lady Rod. [*Starting up.*] How, sir! are ye ser

Eger. Madam, I am too deeply interested, b a man of honour and a lover, to act otherwise you on so tender a subject.

Lady Rod. And so, ye persast in slighting n

Eger. I beg your pardon, but I must be expl and at once declare, that I never can give my where I cannot give my heart.

Lady Rod. Why then, sir, I must tell you your declaration is sic an affront ass na won speerit ought to bear, and here I make a solemn never till pardon it—but upon yean condeetio

Eger. If that condition be in my power, mad

Lady Rod. Sir, it is in your power.

Eger. Then, madam, you may command me

Lady Rod. Why, then, sir, the condeetion is ye must here gie me your honour, that na i tunit, command, or menace o' your faither—i that na consideration whatever, shall induce

take *me*, Rodolpha Lumbercourt, till be your wedded wife.

Eger. Madam! I most solemnly promise I never will.

Lady Rod. And I, sir, in my turn, most solemnly and sincerely thank ye, for your resolution, [*Courtesies.*] and your agreeble aversion, ha! ha! ha! for ye ha made me as happy as a poour wretch, reprieved in the vary instant of intended execution.

Eger. Pray, madam, how am I to understand all this?

Lady Rod. Sir, your frankness and sincerity demand the same behaviour on my side. Therefore, without farther disguise or ambiguity, know, sir, that I myself am ass deeply smitten wi' a certain swain, ass I understand ye are wi yeer Constantia.

Eger. Indeed, madam!

Lady Rod. Oh, sir, notwithstanding aw my show of mirth, and courage, here I stand ass errant a trembling Thisbe, ass ever sighed or mourned for her Peeramus—and, sir, aw my extravagance, levity, and redeeculous behaviour in your presence, noow, and ever since your faither prevailed on mine to consent till this match, has been a premeditated scheme to provoke your gravity and gude sense intill a cordial disgust, and a positive refusal.

Eger. But with your leave, madam, if I may presume so far—pray who is your lover?

Lady Rod. Why, in that too, I shall surprise you perhaps more than ever. In the first place, he is a beggar, and in disgrace wi' an unforgiving faither, and in the next place, sir—he is [*Courtesies.*] your ain brother.

Eger. Is it possible?

Lady Rod. A most amorous truth, sir—that is—ass far ass a woman can answer for her ain heart. So ye see, cousin Charles, thoff I could na mingle affections wi' ye, I ha na ganged oot the family.

Eger. Madam, give me leave to congratul
self upon your affection—you couldn't hav
it on a worthier object; and whatever is t
chance in this lottery of our parents, be assu
my fortune shall be devoted to your happi
his.

Lady Rod. Generous indeed, cousin, bu
whit nobler, I assure you, than your brother,
believes of you; and pray credit me, sir,
shall both remember it, while the heart feels
mory retains, a sense of gratitude; but now,
me ask one question—pray how is your m
fected in this business?

Eger. She knows of my passion, and wi
sure, be a friend to the common cause.

Lady Rod. Ah! that is lucky, vary luck
first step must be to take her advice upon
duct, so as still keep our faithers in the d
we can hit off some measure that wull wi
aboot till our ain purpose, and till the comm
rest of our ain passions.

Eger. You are very right, madam; for sh
father suspect my brother's affection for yo
ship, or mine for Constantia, there is no
what would be the consequence: his whol
ness depends upon this bargain with my lord
gives him the possession of three boroughs, an
madam, are much dearer to him than the h
of his children: I am sorry to say it, but to

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

A Library.

ter SIR PERTINAX *and* COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE.

rt. No, no; come away, Counsellor Plausi-
e away, I say; let them chew upon it—let
w upon it.—Why, Counsellor, did you ever
mpertinate, so meddling, and so obstinate
ad, ass that Sergeant Eitherside? confound
, he has put me oot of aw temper!
He is very positive, indeed, Sir Pertinax, and
was intemperate and rude; but, Sir Perti-
uld not break off the match, notwithstand-
certainly, even without the boroughs, it is
ageous bargain, both to you and your son.
rt. But, Plausible, do you think I wull give
nination till three boroughs? why, I would
e him twanty, nay tharty thousand pounds
her part o' th' bargain—especially at this
when votes are likely to become so valu-
y, mon, if a certain affair comes on, they'll
five hundred per cent.
No doubt they will, Sir Pertinax—but what
lo in this case? for Mr Sergeant insists that
vely agreed to my lord's having the nomi-
the three boroughs during his own life.
t. Why yes, in the first sketch of the agree-
lieve, I did consent; but at that time, mon,

my lord's affairs did not appear to be half so rate, ass I noow find they turn oot. Sir, he m quiesce in whatever I demand, for I ha gott intill sic an hobble, that he canna exist witho

Plau. No doubt, Sir Pertinax, you have hir lutely in your power.

Sir Pert. Vary weel; and ought not a n make his vantage of it?

Plau. No doubt you ought, no manner of but, Sir Pertinax, there is a secret spring in siness, that you do not seem to perceive, and I am afraid, governs the whole matter res these boroughs.

Sir Pert. What spring do ye mean, Couns

Plau. Why, this. I have some reason t that my lord is tied down by some means, o to bring Sergeant Eitherside in, the very cancy, for one of those boroughs—now tha lieve, is the sole motive, why the sergeant is strenuous that my lord should keep the boro his own power, fearing that you might reject some man of your own.

Sir Pert. Oh! my dear Plausible, ye are c yes, vary clever—ye ha hit upo' the vary str has made aw this discord—O! I see it—I see i but haud haud—bide a wee bit—a wee bit, ha a thought come intill my head—yes—I thin Plausible, wi' a little twist in our negociati the vary string, properly tuned, may be still produce the vary harmony they wish for—ye ha it—this sergeant, I see, understands busin if I am not mistaken, knows hoow till take s

Plau. Oh! nobody better, Sir Pertinax, better.

Sir Pert. Why, then, Plausible, the shor awways the best wi' sic a man; ye must ev up till his mark at yeance, and let him know that I wull secure him a seat, for yean of th boroughs.

Plau. Oh! that will do, Sir Pertinax; that will do, I'll answer for it.

Sir Pert. And further, I beg ye wull let him know that I think mysel obliged till conseeder him in this affair, ass acting for me ass weel ass for my lord, ass a common friend till baith, and for the service he has already done us, mak my special compliments till him, and pray, let this soft sterling bit of paper be my faithful advocate till convince him what my gratitude further intends for his great [*Gives him a Bank Bill.*] equity, in adjusting this agreement betwixt my lord's family and mine.

Plau. Ha! ha! ha! Sir Pertinax, upon my word this is noble—ay, ay! this is an eloquent bit of paper, indeed.

Sir Pert. Maister Plausible, in aw human dealings the most effectual method is that of ganging at yeance till the vary bottom of a mon's heart—for if we expact that men should serve us, we must first win their affections by serving them—Oh! here they baith come!

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT *and* SERGEANT EITHERSIDE.

Lord L. My dear Sir Pertinax, what could provoke you to break off this business so abruptly!—You are really wrong in the point; and if you will give yourself time to recollect, you will find that my having the nomination to the boroughs for my life, was a preliminary article—and I appeal to Mr Sergeant Eitherside here, whether I did not always understand it so.

Serg. E. I assure you, Sir Pertinax, that in all his lordship's conversation with me upon this business, and in his positive instructions too, we always understood the nomination to be in my lord, durante vitâ, durante vitâ—clearly, clearly, beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Sir Pert. Why, then, my lord, till shorten the dis-

pute, all I can say, in answer till your lordship, is, that there has been a total mistake betwaxt us in that point—and therefore the treaty must end here—I give it up—I wash my honds of it for ever,—for ever.

Plau. Well, but, gentlemen, a little patience pray. Sure this mistake, somehow or other, may be rectified—Mr Sergeant, pray let you and I step into the next room by ourselves, and reconsider the clause relative to the boroughs, and try if we cannot hit upon some medium that will be agreeable to both parties.

Serg. E. Mr Plausible, I have already considered the clause fully, am entirely master of the question, and my lord cannot give up the point; it is unkind, unreasonable to expect it, and I shall never, never—on no account whatsoever, shall I ever advise him to give it up.

Plau. Nay, Mr Sergeant, I beg you will not misapprehend me—do not think I want his lordship to give up any point without an equivalent. Sir Pertinax, will you permit Mr Sergeant and me to retire for a few moments, to re-consider this point about the three boroughs?

Sir Pert. We aw my heart and saul, Maister Plausible, ainy thing till accommodate his lordship—ainy thing—ainy thing.

Plau. What say you, my lord?

Lord L. Nay, I submit it entirely to you, and Mr Sergeant.

Plau. Come, Mr Sergeant, let us retire.

Lord L. Ay, ay, go, Mr Sergeant, and hear what Mr Plausible has to say, however.

Serg. E. Nay, I will wait on Mr Plausible, my lord, with all my heart; but I am sure I cannot suggest the shadow of a reason for altering my present opinion:—impossible, impossible, he cannot give them up, it is an opinion from which I can never depart.

Plau. Well, well, do not be positive, Mr Sergeant,

do not be positive. I am sure reason, and your client's conveniency, will always make you alter your opinion.

Serg. E. Ay, ay, reason, and my client's conveniency, Mr Plausible, will always controul my opinion, depend upon it. Ay, ay! there you are right. Sir, I attend you. [*Exeunt* LAWYERS.

Sir Pert. I am sorry, my lord, extremely sorry, indeed, that this mistake has happened.

Lord L. Upon honour, and so am I, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Pert. But come, noow, after aw, your lordship must allow, ye ha been i' the wrang. Come, my dear lord; ye must allow that noow.

Lord L. How so, my dear Sir Pertinax?

Sir Pert. Not aboot the boroughs, my lord, for those I do not mind of a bawbee—but aboot yeer distrust of my friendship. Why, do ye think noow,—I appeal till your ain breast, my lord,—do ye think, I say, that I should ever ha refused, or slighted your lordship's nomination till these boroughs?

Lord L. Why, really, I don't think you would, Sir Pertinax; but one must be directed by one's lawyer, you know.

Sir Pert. Ha! my lord, lawyers are a dangerous species of animals till ha ainy dependence upon—they are awways starting punctilios and deeficulties among friends: why, my dear lord, it is their interest, that aw mankind should be at variance; for disagreement is the vary manure wi' whach they enrich and fatten the land of leetigation; and ass they find that that constantly produces the best crop, depend upon it, they wull awways be sure till lay it on ass thick ass they can.

Lord L. Come, come, my dear Sir Pertinax, you must not be angry with the sergeant for his insisting so warmly on this point—for those boroughs, you know, are my sheet-anchor.

Sir Pert. I know it, my lord; and as an instance of my promptness to study, and my acquiescence till

your lordship's inclination, ass I see that this Sergeant Eitherside wishes ye weel, and ye him, I think noow, he would be ass gude a mon to be returned for yean of those boroughs as could be pitched upon, and ass such I humbly recommend him till yeer lordship's consideration.

Lord L. Why, my dear Sir Pertinax, to tell you the truth, I have already promised him; he must be in for one of them, and that is one reason why I insisted so strenuously—he must be in.

Sir Pert. And why not?—why not? is na yeer word a fiat? and wull it na be awways so till me? are ye nait my friend, my patron? and are we nait by this match of our children to be united intill yean interest?

Lord L. So I understand it, I own, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Pert. My lord, it canna' be otherwise—then, for Heaven's sake, ass your lordship and I ha but yean interest for the future, let us ha na mair words aboot these paltry boroughs, but conclude the agreement at yeance—just as it stonds—otherwise there must be new writings drawn, new consultations of lawyers, new objections and delays will arise, creditors wull be impatient and impertinent—so that we shall na finish the Lord knows when.

Lord L. You are right, you are right; say no more, Mac, say no more—split the lawyers—you judge the point better than all Westminster Hall could—it shall stand as it is—yes, it shall be settled your own way, for your interest and mine are the same, I see plainly. Oh! here the lawyers come—so, gentlemen—well, what have ye done?—how are your opinions now?

Enter COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE *and* SERGEANT EITHERSIDE.

Serg. E. My lord, Mr Plausible has convinced me—fully convinced me, that the boroughs should be given up to Sir Pertinax.

Plau. Yes, my lord, I have convinced him—I have

laid such arguments before Mr Sergeant, as were irresistible.

Serg. E. He has indeed, my lord; for when I come to consider the long friendship that has subsisted between your lordship and Sir Pertinax; the great and mutual advantages that must attend this alliance; the various foreclosing, seizing, distraining, and, in short, every shape of ruin that the law can assume, all which must be put in force, should this agreement go off, and as Sir Pertinax gives his honour, that your lordship's nomination shall be sacredly observed, why, upon a nearer review of the whole affair, I am convinced that it will be the wiser measure to conclude the agreement just as it is drawn—just as it is drawn, my lord, it cannot be more to your advantage.

Lord L. I am very glad you think so, Mr Sergeant, because that is my opinion too—so, my dear Eitherside, do you and Plausible dispatch the business now as soon as possible.

Serg. E. My lord, every thing will be ready for signing in less than an hour—come, Mr Plausible, let us go and fill up the blanks, and put the last hand to the writings, on our part.

Plau. I attend you, Mr Sergeant.

[*Exeunt* LAWYERS.

Lord L. And while the lawyers are preparing the writings, Sir Pertinax, I will go and saunter with the women.

Sir Pert. Do, do, my lord, and I wull come till you presently.

Lord L. Very well, my dear Mac, I shall expect you. [*Exit singing.*

Sir Pert. So! a leetle flattery, mixt wi' the finesse of a gilded promise on yean side, and a quantum sufficit of the aurum palpabile on the other, have at last made me the happiest father in Great Britain, and feel nothing but dignity and elevation—haud! haud! *bide a wee! bide a wee!* I ha yean lettle mat-

ter mair in this affair till adjust, and then, Sir Pertinax, ye may dictate till Fortune herself, and send her till govern feuls; while ye show, and convince the world, that wise men awways govern her. Wha's there?

Enter SAM.

Tell my son Egerton I would speak wee him. Now I ha settled the grand point, [*Exit* SAM.] wi' my lord, this, I think, is the proper juncture till feel the poleetical pulse of my spark, and yeance for aw, till set it to the exact measure that I would ha it constantly beat.

Enter EGERTON.

Come hither, Chairles.

Eger. Your pleasure, sir?

Sir Pert. Aboot twa hours since, I told you, Chairles, that I received this letter express, complaining of your brother's acteevity at an election i' the north, against a particular friend of mine; which has given great offence; and, sir, ye are mentioned in the letter as weel ass he. To be plain, I must roundly tell ye, that on this interview depends my happiness ass a mon and a faither, and my affection till ye, sir, ass a son, for the remainder of your days.

Eger. I hope, sir, I shall never do any thing either to forfeit your affection, or disturb your happiness.

Sir Pert. I hope so too; but to the point—the fact is this. There has been a motion made this vary day to bring on the grand affair, which is settled for Friday se'ennight; noow, sir, ass ye are popular, ha talents, and are weel heard, it is expacted, and I insist upon it, that ye endeavour till atone for yeer misconduct, by preparing and taking a lairge share in that question, and supporting it wi' aw your poower.

Eger. Sir, I have always divided as you directed, except on one occasion—never voted against your friends, only in that affair—but, sir, I hope you will *not so* exert your influence, as to insist upon my sup-

porting a measure by an obvious, prostituted sophistry, in direct opposition to my character and my conscience.

Sir Pert. Conscience! did ye ever hear ainy man talk of conscience in poleetical maiters? conscience, quotha! I ha been in parliament these three and tharty years, and never heard the term made use of before—sir, it is an unparliamentary word, and ye wull be laughed at for it.

Eger. Then, sir, I must frankly tell you, that you work against my nature—would make me a devoted partizan to selfish leaders, who have no friendship but in faction, no merit but in fallacy, no regard to their king, or country, nor to any interest in any measure whatsoever, but their own, and with such men I cannot connect myself. For know, sir, that the malignant ferment, which the venal ambition of the times provokes in the heads and hearts of other men—I detest.

Sir Pert. What are ye aboot, sir; wi' your malignant, yeer venal ambeetion and your romantic nonsense? Sir, every mon should be ambeetious till serve his country—and every mon should be rewarded for it. And pray, sir, would not ye wish till serve yeer country? answer me that, I say, would not ye wish till serve your country?

Eger. Only show me how I can serve my country, and my life is hers. Were I qualified to lead her armies, to steer her fleets, and deal her honest vengeance on her insulting foes; or, could my eloquence pull down a state leviathan, mighty by the plunder of his country, black with the treasons of her disgrace, and send his infamy down to free posterity, as a monumental terror to corrupt ambition, I would be foremost in such service, and act it with the unremitting ardour of a Roman spirit.

Sir Pert. Why, ye are mad, sir, stark, staring, raving mad; certainly the fellow has been bitten by some mad whig or other! ye are vary young—vary

young, indeed, in these maiters; but experience will convince ye, sir, that every mon in public business has twa consciences; mind, sir; twa consciences, a releegious and a poleetical conscience—you see a mairchant, or a shopkeeper, that kens the science of the world, awways luocks upon an oath in a custom-house, or behind a counter, only as an oath in business—a thing of course—a mere thing o' course, that has nathing till do wi' releegion—and just so it is at an election, exactly the same—for instance, noow, I am a candidate—pray observe—I gang till a periwig-maker, a hatter, or a hosier, and I give ten, twanty, or tharty guineas, for a periwig, a hat, or a pair of hose, and so on through a majority o' voters; vary weel; what is the consequence? why, this commercial intercourse, ye see, begets a friendship betwixt us, and in a day or twa, these men gang and give me their suffrages. Weel, what is the inference, pray, sir? can ye, or any lawyer, divine, or casuist, caw this a bribe? nai, sir; in fair poleetical reasoning, it is ainly generosity on the ain side, and gratitude on the other—so, sir, let me hai nai mair of yeer releegious, or philosophical refinements; but prepare—attend—and speak till the question, or ye are nai son o' mine—sir, I insist upon it.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir, my lord says the writings are now ready, and his lordship and the lawyers are waiting for you and Mr Egerton.

Sir Pert. Vary weel; we'll attend his lordship. [*Exit* SAM.] Come, sir, let us gang doown and dispatch the business. [*Going, is stopped by* EGERTON.

Eger. Sir, with your permission, I beg you will first hear me a word or two upon this subject.

Sir Pert. Weel, sir; what would ye say?

Eger. I have often resolved to let you know [*Bows very low.*] my aversion to this match.

ir Pert. Hoow, sir?

ger. But my respect, and fear of disobliging you, e hitherto kept me silent.

ir Pert. Your avarsion! hoow dare ye use sic guage till me? your avarsion! luock you, sir, I l cut the matter vary short—Conseeder—my fore e is na inheritance; aw my ain acquiseetion; I make ducks and drakes of it; so do not provoke , but sign the articles directly.

ger. I beg your pardon, sir; but I must be free this occasion, and tell you at once, that I can no ger dissemble the honest passion, that fills my rt for another woman.

ir Pert. Hoow! another woman! and, ye villain, r dare ye love another woman without my parmis— but what other woman? wha is she? speak, speak.

ger. Constantia. [*Bowing very low.*

ir Pert. Constantia! Oh, ye profligate! what, a ature taken in for charity?

ger. Her poverty is not her crime, sir, but her fortune. Her birth is equal to the noblest; and ue, though covered with a village garb, is virtue , and of more worth to me than all the splendour ermined pride, or redundant wealth; and there- , sir— [*Goes up close to him.*

ir Pert. Haud your jabbering, ye villain; haud r jabbering! none of your romance, or refinement, me. I ha but yean question till ask ye, but yean stion, and then I ha done wi' ye for ever—for ever herefore think, before ye answer; wull ye marry lady, or wull ye break my heart?

ger. Sir, my presence shall not offend you any ger; but when reason and reflection take their , I am sure you will not be pleased with yourself this impaternal passion. [*Going.*

ir Pert. Tarry, I command ye—and I command ikewise not to stir, till ye ha given me ain answer

—a defeenitive answer—wull ye marry the l
wull ye not?

Eger. Since you command me, sir, know th
I cannot—will not marry her. [*Exit* Eg

Sir Pert. Oh! the villain has shot me throu
head; he has cut my vitals! I shall run distra
there never was sic a bargain ass I ha made
fuelish lord—possession of his whole estate, wi
boroughs upon it; sax members, why what an
seetion, what consequence! what dignity, what
till the house of Macsycophant—O! domn the
—three boroughs, only for sending doon six
sticks—Oh! miserable, ever since this fallov
intill the world have I been secretly prepari
for the seat of ministerial dignity, and sure
never were times so favourable—every thin
spires; for aw the auld poleeticall post hor
broken-winded, and foundered, and canna
and ass till the rising generation, the vanity
passing yean another in what they fuelishly ca
and ailegance, binds them hond and foot in the
of luxury; which wull awways set them up
best bidder; so that if they can but get wher
till supply their dissipation, a meenister may
the poleetical morals of aw sic voluptuaries
vote that would sell the nation till Prester Jo
their boasted leeberties till the Great Mogul.

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Library.

Enter SIR PERTINAX *and* BETTY.

ir Pert. Come this way, Betty, come this way; ire a gude girl, and I'll reward ye for this disco- r. Oh! the villain! offer her marriage?

etty. It is true, indeed, I would not tell your ho- r a lie for the world; but in troth it lay upon my ncience, and I thought it my duty to tell your ship.

ir Pert. Ye are right, ye are right; it was yeer y to tell me, and I'll reward you for it; ye say ster Sidney is in love wi' her too—pray how came by that intelligence?

etty. Oh! sir, I know when folks are in love, let n strive to hide it as much as they will; I know y Mr Sidney's eyes, when I see him stealing a sly look at her, by his trembling, his breathing short, ighing when they are reading together—besides, he made love verses upon her, in praise of her ne, and her playing upon the music; ay! and I ect another thing, sir, she has a sweetheart, if a husband, not far from hence.

ir Pert. Wha! Constantia?

etty. Ay, Constantia, sir—lord, I can know the le affair, sir, only for sending over to Hadley, to er Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir Pert. Then send this instant, and get me a particular account of it.

Betty. That I will this minute, sir.

Sir Pert. In the mean time keep a strict watch upon Constantia—and be sure you bring me word of whatever new matter ye can pick up aboot her, my son, or this Hadley husband, or sweetheart.

Betty. Never fear, sir. [*Exit* BETTY.

Sir Pert. Wha's there?

Enter TOMLINS.

Where is Maister Sidney?

Tomlins. In the drawing-room, sir.

Sir Pert. Tell him I would speak wi' him. [*Exit* TOMLINS.] Why suppose this Sidney noow should be privy till his friend Chairles's love for Constantia—what then, gude traith it is natural till think that his ain love wull demand the preference—ay, and obtain it too—yas, yas! self—self! is an ailoquent advocate on these occasions—for only make it a mon's interest till be a rascal, and I think we may safely depend upon his integreety, in serving himsel.

Enter SIDNEY.

Sid. Sir Pertinax, your servant. Mr Tomlins told me you desired to speak with me.

Sir Pert. Yes, I wanted till speak wi' ye upon a vary singular business—Maister Sidney, give me your hond. Guin it did na luock like flattery (which I detest,) I would tell ye, Maister Sidney, that ye are an honour till your cloth, yeer country, and till human nature.

Sid. Sir, you are very obliging.

Sir Pert. Sit ye doon here, Maister Sidney—sit ye doon here by me—my friend. [*They sit.*] I am under the greatest obligations till ye, for the care ye ha taken of Chairles—the principles, releegious, moral, and poleetical, that ye ha infused intill him, demand the

warmest return of gratitude, baith fra him, and fra me.

Sid. Your approbation, sir, next to that of my own conscience, is the best test of my endeavours, and the highest applause they can receive.

Sir Pert. Sir, ye deserve it, richly deserve it; and noow, sir, the same care that ye ha had of Chairles, the same my wife has taken of her favourite, and sure never were accomplishments, knowledge, or principles, social and releegious, impressed intill a better nature than Constantia's.

Sid. In truth, sir, I think so too.

Sir Pert. She is, besides, a gentlewoman, and of ass gude a family ass any in this county.

Sid. So I understand, sir.

Sir Pert. Sir, her faither had a vast estate; the which he dissipated and melted in feastings, and friendships, and charities, hospitalities, and sic kind of nonsense—but to the business—Maister Sidney, I love ye—yas, I love you, and ha been fuocking oot, and contriving hoow till settle ye in the world: sir, I want till see ye comfortably and honourably fixed at the heed of a respectable family, and guin ye were my ain son, a thoosand times, I could na make a mair valuable present till ye for that purpose ass a partner for life, than this same Constantia, wi' sic a fortune doon wi' her, ass ye yoursel shall deem to be competent: ay, and an assurance of every canonical contingency in my poower till confer, or promote.

Sid. Sir, your offer is noble and friendly; but though the highest station would derive lustre from Constantia's charms and worth, yet, were she more amiable than love could paint her in the lover's fancy, and wealthy beyond the thirst of the miser's appetite, I could not—would not wed her. [*Rises.*

Sir Pert. Not wed her! odzwins, mon! ye surprise me!—why so? what hinders? [*Rises.*

Sid. I beg you will not ask a reason for my refusal, but, briefly and finally, it cannot be, nor is it a subject I can longer converse upon.

Sir Pert. Weel, sir, I ha done, I ha done—sit doon, man—sit doon again—sit ye doon. [*They sit.*] I shall mention it no more—not but I must confess honestly till ye, friend Sidney, that the match, had ye approved of my proposal, besides profiting you, would ha been of singular sarvice till me likewise; hoowever ye may still sarve me ass effectually ass if ye had married her.

Sid. Then, sir, I am sure I will most heartily.

Sir Pert. I believe it, I believe it, friend Sidney, and I thank ye. I ha na friend till depend upon but yeersel—my heart is awmost broke—I canna help these tears; and to tell ye the fact at yeance, your friend Chairles is struck wi' a most dangerous malady, a kind of insanity—in short, this Constantia, I am afraid, has cast an evil eye upon him—do ye understand me?

Sid. Not very well, sir.

Sir Pert. Why, he is grievously smitten wi' the love of her, and I am afraid will never be cured without a leetle of your assistance.

Sid. Of my assistance! pray, sir, in what manner?

Sir Pert. Chairles has the utmost deference to any opinion or judgment of yours; now, if you would advise him against this mad marriage with Constantia—the girl is very poor—a mere dependant on me; could you not hint—a—a—advise—and bring an affair of gallantry between them? [SIDNEY *starts up.*] What is the matter wi' ye, mon—what the deevil gars ye start and luock so astonished?

Sid. Sir, you amaze me! In what part of my mind or conduct, have you found that baseness, which entitles you to treat me with this indignity?

Sir Pert. Indignity—what indignity do ye mean

sir? is asking ye till serve a friend wi' a wench an indignity? Sir, am not I your patron, and benefactor, ha?

Sid. You are, sir; and I feel your bounty at my heart—but the virtuous gratitude that sowed the deep sense of it there, does not inform me, that in return, the tutor's sacred function, or the social virtue of the man, must be debased into the pupil's pandar, or the patron's prostitute.

Sir Pert. Hoow! what, sir, do ye dispute? are ye na my dependant!—ha! and do ye hesitate aboot an ordinary civeelity, which is practised every day by men and women of the first fashion? Sir, let me tell ye, however nice ye may be, there is na a dependant aboot the court that would na jump at sic an opportunity till oblige his patron.

Sid. Indeed, sir, I believe the doctrine of pimping for patrons may be learned in every party school; for where faction and public venality are taught as measures necessary to the prosperity of the Briton and the patriot—there every vice is to be expected.

Sir Pert. Oho! oho! vary weel, fine insinuations! I ken what you glance at—yes, ye intend this satire as a slander upon meenisters—ay! ay! fine sedeetion against government—Oh! ye villain—ye—ye—sirrah—ye are a black sheep, and I'll mark ye, and represent ye; I'll draw your picture—ah! ah! I am glad ye show yoursel—yas, yas—ye ha taken off the mask at last, ye ha been in my service for many years, ye hypoerite! ye impostor—but I never knew your principles before.

Sid. Sir, you never affronted them before; if you had you should have shown them sooner.

Sir Pert. I ha done wi' ye—I ha done wi' ye.—Ay, ay, noow I can account for my son's conduct; his aversion till courts, till meenisters, levees, public business, and his disobedience till my commands—a perfeedious fellow—you're a Judas! ye ha ruined the

morals of my son, ye villain; but I ha done wi' ye; however this I wull prophesy at oor pairting, for your comfort, that guin ye air so vary squeamish in obliging your patron, ye'll never rise in the church.

Sid. Though my conduct, sir, should not make me rise in her power, I am sure it will in her favour—in the favour of my own conscience too, and in the esteem of all worthy men; and that, sir, is a power and dignity beyond what patrons of any denomination can confer. [*Exit* SIDNEY.

Sir Pert. What a reegorous, saucy, stiff-necked fellow it is!—I see my folly noow; I am undone by my ain policy! this Sidney was the last man that should ha been aboot my son. The fellow, indeed, hath given him principles that might ha done vary weel among the ancient Romans, but are domned unfit for the modern Britons—weel! guin I had a thousand sons, I never would suffer yean of yeer English university-bred fellows till be aboot a son of mine again; for they ha sic an a pride of leeterature, and character, and sic saucy English notions of leeberty, conteenually fermenting in their thoughts, that a mon is never sure of one of them; but what am I to do? Zoons, he must nai marry this beggar—I canna sit doon tamely under that—stay, haud a wee; by the blood I have it—yas! I ha hit upon't.

Enter BETTY.

Betty. Oh! sir; I have got the whole secret out.

Sir Pert. Aboot what!

Betty. About Miss Constantia; I have just had all the particulars from Farmer Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir Pert. Weel, weel, but what is the story? quick, quick, what is it?

Betty. Why, sir, it is certain that Mrs Constantia has a sweetheart, or a husband, a sort of a gentleman, or a gentleman's gentleman, they don't know which,

that lodges at Gaffer Hodges's: for Sukey says she saw them together last night in the dark walk, and Mrs Constantia was all in tears.

Sir Pert. Ah! I am afraid this is too gude news till be true.

Betty. Oh! sir, it is certainly true; besides, sir, she has just writ a letter to the gallant; and I have sent John the gardener to her, who is to carry it to him to Hadley; now, sir, if your worship would seize the letter.—See, see, sir, here John comes, with the letter in his hand?

Sir Pert. Go, go; step ye oot, Betty, and leave the fellow till me.

Betty. I will, sir. [*Exit* BETTY.

Enter JOHN, *with a Packet, and a Letter.*

John. There, go you into my pocket. [*Puts up the Packet.*] There's nobody in the library—so I'll e'en go through the short way; let me see what is the name—Mel—Meltil—O, no! Melville, at Gaffer Hodges's.

Sir Pert. What letter is that, sir?

John. Letter, sir!

Sir Pert. Give it me, sir.

John. An't please your honour, sir—it—it—it is not mine.

Sir Pert. Deliver it this instant, sirrah, or I'll break yeer head.

John. There, there, your honour.

[*Gives the Letter to* SIR PERTINAX.

Sir Pert. Begone, rascal!—this I suppose wull let us intill the whole business.

John. [*Aside.*] You have got the letter, old surly, but the packet is safe in my pocket. I'll go and deliver that, however; for I will be true to poor Mrs Constantia, in spite of you. [*Exit* JOHN.

Sir Pert. [*Reading the Letter.*] Um!—Um!—Um! *And bless my eyes with the sight of you.* Um! um!

throw myself into your dear arms. Zoons, this letter is invaluable!

Enter BETTY.

Oh! Betty, ye are an excellent wench, this letter is worth a million.

Betty. Is it, as I suspected, sir, to her sweetheart?

Sir Pert. It is—it is! bid Constantia pack out of the house this instant; and let them get the chaise ready, to carry her wherever she pleases; but first send my wife and son hither.

Betty. I shall, sir.

Sir Pert. Do so, begone. [*Exit* BETTY.] Aha! Maister Charles, I believe I shall cure your passion for a vartuous beggar, noow; I think he canna be so infatuated as to be a dupe till a strumpet—Let me see—hoow am I till act noow?—why, like a true poleetician, I must pretend most sincerity where I intend most deceit.

Enter LADY MACSYCOPHANT *and* EGERTON.

Weel, Chairles, notwithstanding the meesery ye ha brought upon me, I ha sent for ye and yeer mother, in order till convince ye baith of my affection, and my readiness till forgive; nay, and even till indulge your perverse passion; for since I find this Constantia has got hold of your heart, and that your mother and ye think that ye can never be happy withoot her, why I'll na longer oppose yeer inclinations.

Eger. Dear sir, you snatch me from sharpest misery! On my knees let my heart thank you for this goodness

Lady Mac. Let me express my thanks too, and my joy; for had you not consented to his marrying her, we all should have been miserable.

Sir Pert. Weel, I am glad I ha found a way till please ye baith at last—but noow, my dear Chairles

suppose noow, that this spotless vestal, this wonder of vartue, this idol of your heart, should be a concealed wanton, after aw?

Eger. A wanton, sir! [*Eagerly.*

Sir Pert. Or suppose that she should have an engagement of marriage, or an intrigue wi' another mon, and is only making a dupe of ye aw this time; I say only suppose it, my dear, dear Chairles; what would ye think of her?

Eger. I should think her the most deceitful, and the most subtle of her sex, and, if possible, would never think of her again.

Sir Pert. Wull ye give me yeer honour of that?

Eger. Most solemnly, sir.

Sir Pert. Enough—I am satisfied. [*Cries with joy.*] You make me young again; I was afraid ye were fascinated wi' the charms of a crack. Do ye ken this hond?

Eger. Mighty well, sir.

Sir Pert. And ye, madam?

Lady Mac. As well as I do my own, sir: it is Constantia's.

Sir Pert. It is so; and a better evidence it is, than any that can be given by the human tongue; here is a warm, rapturous, lascivious letter, under the hypocritical syren's ain hond; her ain hond, sir, her ain hond. But judge yourselves——read it.

Eger. [Reads.] *I have only time to tell you, that the family came down sooner than I expected, and that I cannot bless my eyes with a sight of you till the evening. The notes and jewels, which the bearer of this will deliver to you, were presented to me since I saw you, by the son of my benefactor*——

Sir Pert. Now mark.

Eger. [Reads.] *All which I beg you will convert to your own immediate use, for my heart has no room for any wish, or fortune, but what* contributes to your *relief and happiness*——

Sir Pert. Oh, Chairles, Chairles! do you see, sir, what a dupe she makes of you? But mark what follows; mark, Chairles, mark.

Eger [Reads.] *Oh, how I long*——

Sir Pert. Mark.

Eger. [Reads.] *To throw myself into your dear, dear arms*——

Sir Pert. Mark, mark.

Eger. [Reads.] *To sooth your fears, your apprehensions, and your sorrows. I have something to tell you of the utmost moment, but will reserve it till we meet this evening in the dark walk*——in the dark walk?

Sir Pert. In the dark walk—ah! an evil-eyed curse upon her! yas, yas, she has been often in the dark walk, I believe—but read, read!

Eger. [Reads.] *In the mean time, banish all fears, and hope the best, from fortune, and your ever dutiful and ever affectionate*

CONSTANTIA HARRINGTON.

Sir Pert. There, there's a warm epistle for you! in short, the fact is, the hussy, ye must know, is married till the fellow.

Eger. Not unlikely, sir.

Lady Mac. Indeed, by her letter, I believe she is.

Sir Pert. Noow, madam, what amends can ye make me for countenancing your son's passion for sic an a reptile?' and ye, sir, what ha ye till say for your disobedience and your phrenzy? Oh! Chairles! Chairles! you'll shorten my days! [*Sits down.*

Eger. Pray, sir, be patient—compose yourself a moment! I will make you any compensation in my power.

Sir Pert. Then instantly sign the articles of marriage.

Eger. The lady, sir, has never yet been consulted, and I have some reason to believe that her heart is engaged to another man.

Sir Pert. Sir, that is na business of yours—I know she wull consent; and that's aw we are till consider. Oh! here comes my lord!

Enter LORD LUMBERCOURT.

Lord L. Sir Pertinax, every thing is ready, and the lawyers wait for us.

Sir Pert. We attend your lordship; where is Lady Rodolpha?

Lord L. Giving some female consolation to poor Constantia. Why, my lady, ha! ha! ha! I hear your vestal, Constantia, has been flirting!

Sir Pert. Yas, yas, my lord, she is in very gude order for ainy mon that wants a wife, and an heir till his estate intill the bargain.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tomlins. Sir, there's a man below that wants to speak to your honour upon particular business.

Sir Pert. Sir, I canno speak till ainy body noow—he must come another time; haud—stay, what, is he a gentleman?

Tomlins. He looks something like one, sir; a sort of a gentleman; but he seems to be in a kind of a passion, for when I asked his name, he answered hastily, 'Tis no matter, friend; go tell your master there is a gentleman here, that must speak to him directly.

Sir Pert. Must! ha! vary peremptory indeed! Pr'ythee let's see this angry sort of a gentleman, for curiosity's sake. [*Exit* TOMLINS.

Enter LADY RODOLPHA.

Lady Rod. Oh! my Lady Macsycophant, I am come an humble advocate for a weeping piece of female frailty, who begs she may be permitted to speak till your ladyship, before you finally reprobate her.

Sir Pert. I beg your pardon, Lady Rodolpha, but it must not be; see her, she shall not.

Lady Mac. Nay, there can be no harm, my in hearing what she has to say for herself.

Sir Pert. I tell you it shall not be.

Lady Mac. Well, well, my dear, I have d have done.

Enter TOMLINS *and* MELVILLE.

Tomlins. Sir, that is my master.

Sir Pert. Weell, sir, pray what is your urge siness wi' me, sir?

Mel. To shun disgrace, and punish basenes

Sir Pert. Punish basehess! what does the mean? wha are ye, sir?

Mel. A man, sir.

Sir Pert. A mon, sir!

Mel. And one whose spirit and fortune onc as proud a sway as any within this county's lir

Lord L. You seem to be a soldier, sir?

Mel. I was, sir, and have the soldier's certi to prove my service—rags and scars: for te years, in India's parching clime, I bore my co cause, and in noblest dangers sustained it wi sword—at length ungrateful peace has laid me where welcome war first took me up—in pov and the dread of cruel creditors. Paternal af brought me to my native land, in quest of a child. I found her, as I thought, amiable as p fondness could desire, but lust and foul sed have snatched her from me; and hither am I fraught with a father's anger and a soldier's h to seek the seducer, and glut revenge.

Lady Mac. Pray, sir, who is your daughte

Mel. I blush to own her—but—Constantia

Omnes. How!

Lady Mac. Constantia!

Eger. Is Constantia your daughter, sir?

Mel. She is, and was the only comfort that fortune, or my own extravagance, had left m

Sir Pert. Gude traith, then I fancy ye wull find t vary little comfort fra her; for she is na better an she should be—she has had na damage in this nsion; but ye may gang till Hadley, till yean Far- ır Hodges's, and there ye may learn the whole story, a cheel they caw Melville.

Mel. Melville!

Sir Pert. Yas, sir; Melville.

Mel. O! would to Heaven she had no crime to an- er, but her commerce with Melville—no, sir, he is t the man; it is your son, your Egerton, that has luced her! and here, sir, are the evidences of his luction.

Eger. Of my seduction, sir!

Mil. Of yours, sir, if your name be Egerton.

Eger. I am that man, sir; but pray what is your idence?

Mel. These bills, and these gorgeous jewels—not to had in her menial state, but at the price of chas- r; not an hour since, she sent them, impudently ıt them, by a servant of this house; contagious in- ny started from their touch.

Eger. Sir, perhaps you may be mistaken concern- the terms on which she received them; do you clear her conduct with respect to Melville, and I l instantly satisfy your fears concerning the jewels, l her virtue.

Mel. Sir, you give me new life; you are my better rel—I believe in your words, your looks—know n—I am that Melville.

Sir Pert. Hoow, sir! ye that Melville, that was at mer Hodges's?

Mel. The same, sir; it was he brought my Con- ntia to my arms, lodged and secreted me—once lowly tenant, now my only friend; the fear of xorable creditors made me change my name from rrington to Melville, till I could see and consult ne, who once called themselves my friends.

Eger. Sir, suspend your fears and anger, but for a few minutes—I will keep my word with you religiously; and bring your Constantia to your arms, as virtuous and as happy as you could wish her.

[*Exeunt* LADY MACSYCOPHANT *and* EGERTON.

Sir Pert. The clearing up of this wench's virtue is dom'd unlucky! I'm afraid it will ruin aw oor affairs again—hoowever, I ha yean stroke still in my heed, that wull secure the bargain wi my lord, let matters gang as they wull. [*Aside.*] But I wonder, Maister Melville, that ye did na pick up some leetle matter of the siller in the Indies—Ah! there ha been bonny fortunes snapped up there of late years by some of the meelitary blades.

Mel. Very true, sir; but it is an observation among soldiers, that there are some men, who never meet with any thing in the service but blows and ill fortune—I was one of those, even to a proverb.

Sir Pert. Ah! 'tis pity, sir; a great pity, noow, that ye did na get a mogul, or some sic an animal intill your clutches—Ah! I should like till ha the strangling of a nabob—the rummaging of his gold dust, his jewel closet, and aw his magazines of bars and ingots; ha! ha! ha! gude trouth noow, sic an aw fellow would be a bonny cheel to bring over till this toown, and till exhibit him riding on an elephant; upon honour a mon might raise a poll-tax by him, that would gang near till pay the debts of the nation!

Enter EGERTON, CONSTANTIA, LADY MACSYCOPHANT, *and* SIDNEY.

Eger. Sir, I promised to satisfy your fears concerning your daughter's virtue; and my best proof to you and all the world, that I think her not only chaste, but the most deserving of her sex, is, that I have made her the partner of my heart, and the tender guardian of my earthly happiness for life!

Sir Pert. Hoow, married!

Eger. I know, sir, at present we shall meet your anger—but time, reflection, and our dutiful conduct, we hope, will reconcile you to our happiness.

Sir Pert. Naver, naver: and could I make ye, her, and aw your issue beggars—I would move hell, heaven, and earth till effect it.

Lord L. Why, Sir Pertinax, this is a total revolution, and will entirely ruin my affairs.

Sir Pert. My lord, wi the consent of your lordship and Lady Rodolpha, I ha an expedient till offer, that wull not ainly punish that rebellious villain, but answer every end that your lordship and Lady Rodolpha proposed by the intended match wee him.

Lord L. I doubt it much, Sir Pertinax; I doubt it much; but what is it, sir? what is your expedient?

Sir Pert. My lord, I ha another son, my son Sandy, the most virtuous lad that ever was born; and, provided the lady and your lordship ha na objection till him, every article of that rebel's intended marriage shall be amply fulfilled, upon Lady Rodolpha's union with my younger son, Sandy.

Lord L. Why, that is an expedient, indeed, Sir Pertinax; but what say you, Rodolpha?

Lady Rod. Nay, nay, my lord, as I had na reason till ha the least affection till my cousin Egerton, and ass my intended marriage wi him was entirely an act of obedience till my grandmother, provided my cousin Sandy wull be as agreeable till her ladyship, ass my cousin Chairles here, would ha been—I have na the least objection till the change: ay, ay, upon honour, yean brother is ass gude to Rodolpha ass another.

Sir Pert. I'll ainswer, madam, for your grandmother; noow, my lord, what say you?

Lord L. Nay, Sir Pertinax, so the agreement stands, all is right again; come, child, let us begone. Look ye, Sir Pertinax, let me have no more perplexity, or trouble about writings, lawyers, duns, debts, or daugh-

ter; only let me be at my ease, and rat me if I care one pinch of snuff if her ladyship concorporates with the Cham of Tartary. [*Exit* LORD LUMBERCOURT.

Sir Pert. As to ye, my Lady Macsycophant, I suppose ye concluded, before ye gave your consent till this match, that there would be an end of every thing betwixt ye and me: live wi your Constantia, madam, your son, and that black sheep there; live wi them, ye shall ha a jointure, but not a bawbee besides, living or dead, shall ye, or any of your issue, ever see of mine; and so my vengeance light upon ye aw together! [*Exit* SIR PERTINAX.

Lady Rod. And noow, gude folks, I will leave ye aw with the fag end of an awd north country wish, brought fra the hospitable land of fair Strathbogie; may mutual love and gude humour ever be the guest of your hearts, the theme of your tongues, and the blithsome phantome of aw your tricksy dreams through the rugged road of this crooked, deceitful world; and may our fathers be an example to oorsel's, that will remind us to treat our bairns, should Heaven croon our endeavours, wi more leeberality and affection, than that with which our fathers have treated us.

[*Exit* LADY RODOLPHA.

Eger. You seem melancholy, sir.

Mel. These precarious turns of fortune, sir, will press upon the heart: for notwithstanding my Constantia's happiness, and mine in her's, I own I cannot help feeling some regret, that my misfortunes should be the cause of any disagreement between a father and the man, to whom I am under the most endearing obligations.

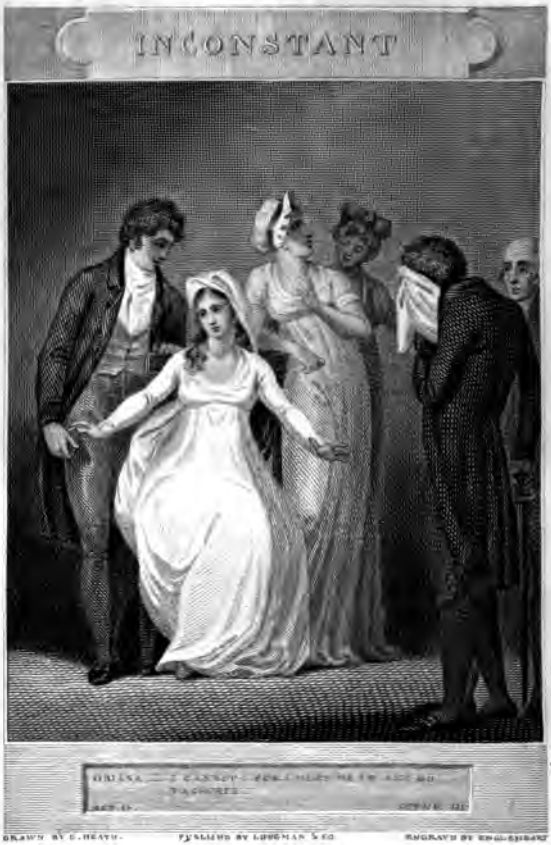
Eger. You, sir, have no share in his disagreement; for had not you been born, from my father's nature, some other cause of his resentment must have happened; but for a time, sir, at least, and I hope for life, affliction, and angry vicissitudes have taken their leave of us all; if affluence can procure content and

ease, they are within our reach. My fortune is ample, and shall be dedicated to the happiness of this domestic circle.

My scheme, though mock'd by knave, coquet, and fool,
To thinking minds must prove this golden rule:
In all pursuits—but chiefly in a wife,
Not wealth, but morals, make the happy life.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE END.



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THE

INCONSTANT;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY GEORGE FARQUHAR, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.

REMARKS.

This comedy, by a favourite writer, had a reception, ı the first night of its appearance, far inferior to at of his other productions. It was with difficulty ved from condemnation; and the author, in his prece, has boldly charged some secret enemies with ıving attempted its destruction.

Dramatic authors have fewer enemies at the prent period, or they have more humility, than forerly. For now, when their works are hissed from e stage, they acknowledge they have had a fair trial, ıd deserve their fate. Wherefore should an auıor seek for remote causes, to account for his failures, hen to himself alone he is certain ever to impute all is success?

Neither the wit, humour, nor the imitation of naıre, in this play, are of that forcible kind, with which ıe audience had been usually delighted by Farıhar; and, that the moral gave a degree of superirity to this drama, was, in those days, of little conequence: the theatre was ordained, it was thought, or mere pleasure, nor did any one wish it should egenerate into instruction.

It may be consolatory to the disappointed authors f the present day, to find how the celebrated author

of this comedy was incommoded with theatrical crosses. He was highly offended, that his play was not admired; still more angry, that there was an empty house on his sixth night, and more angry still, that the Opera House, for the benefit of a French dancer, was, about this time, filled even to the annoyance of the crowded company. The following are his own words on the occasion:

"It is the prettiest way in the world of despising the French king, to let him see that we can afford money to bribe his dancers, when he, poor man, has exhausted all his stock in buying some pitiful towns and principalities. What can be a greater compliment to our generous nation, than to have the lady on her re-tour to Paris, boast of her splendid entertainment in England: of the complaisance, liberty, and good nature of a people, who thronged her house so full, that she had not room to stick a pin; and left a poor fellow, who had the misfortune of being one of themselves, without one farthing, for half a year's pains he had taken for their entertainment."

This complaint is curious, on account of the talents of the man who makes it; and, for the same cause, highly reprehensible. If Farquhar thought himself superior to the French dancer, why did he honour her by a comparison? and if he wanted bread, why did he not suffer in silence, rather than insinuate, he should like to receive it through the medium of a benefit?

A hundred years of refinement (the exact time since this author wrote) may have weakened the force

of the dramatic pen; but it has, happily, elevated authors above the servile spirit of dedications, or the meaner practice, of taking public benefits.

As the moral of this comedy has been mentioned as one of its highest recommendations, it must be added—that, herein, the author did not invent, but merely adopt, as his own, an occurrence which took place in Paris about that period, just as he has represented it in his last act. The Chevalier de Chastillon was the man who is personated by young Mirabel, in this extraordinary event; and the Chevalier's friend, his betrothed wife, and his beautiful courtezan, are all exactly described in the characters of Duretete, Oriana, and Lamorce.

Having justly abridged Farquhar of the honour of inventing a moral, it may be equally just, to make a slight apology for his chagrin at the slender receipts of his sixth night.—He once possessed the income which arose from a captain's commission in the army; and having prudently conceived that this little revenue would not maintain a wife, he had resolved to live single, unless chance should bestow on him a woman of fortune. His person and address were so extremely alluring, that a woman of family, but of no fortune, conceiving the passion she felt for him to be love, pretended she possessed wealth, and deceived him into a marriage, which plunged them both into the utmost poverty,

This admirable dramatist seems to have been born for a dupe. In his matrimonial distress, he applied to a nobleman, who had professed a friendship for

him, and besought his advice how to surmount his difficulties: The counsel given was—"Sell your commission for present support, and, before the money for its sale is expended, I will procure you another." Farquhar complied—and his patron broke his word.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OLD MIRABEL	*Mr Dowton.*
YOUNG MIRABEL	*Mr C. Kemble.*
CAPTAIN DURETETE	*Mr Bannister.*
DUGARD	*Mr Holland.*
PETIT	*Mr De Camp.*

BRAVOES—*Messrs Maddocks, Webb, Evans and Sparks.*

ORIANA	*Mrs Young.*
BISARRE	*Mrs Jordan.*
LAMORCE	*Miss Tidswell.*

THE

INCONSTANT.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

The Street.

Enter DUGARD, *and his Man,* PETIT, *in Riding Habits.*

Dug. Sirrah, what's o'clock?

Petit. Turned of eleven, sir.

Dug. No more! We have rid a swinging pace from Nemours, since two this morning! Petit, run to Rousseau's, and bespeak a dinner, at a louis d'or a head, to be ready by one.

Petit. How many will there be of you, sir?

Dug. Let me see—Mirabel one, Duretete two, myself three——

Petit. And I four.

Dug. How now, sir? at your old travelling familiarity! When abroad, you had some freedom, for want

Oriana. Why, truly, brother, I look pretty well, thank nature and my toilet; I eat three meals a day, am very merry when up, and sleep soundly when I'm down.

Dug. But, sister, you remember that upon my going abroad, you would chuse this old gentleman for your guardian; he's no more related to our family than Prester John, and I have no reason to think you mistrusted my management of your fortune: Therefore, pray be so kind as to tell me, without reservation, the true cause of making such a choice.

Oriana. Lookye, brother, you were going a rambling, and 'twas proper, lest I should go a rambling too, that somebody should take care of me. Old Monsieur Mirabel is an honest gentleman, was our father's friend, and has a young lady in his house, whose company I like, and who has chosen him for her guardian as well as I.

Dug. Who, Mademoiselle Bisarre?

Oriana. The same; we live merrily together, without scandal or reproach; we make much of the old gentleman between us, and he takes care of us; all the week we dance and sing, and upon Sundays, go first to church, and then to the play.—Now, brother, besides these motives for chusing this gentleman for my guardian, perhaps I had some private reasons.

Dug. Not so private as you imagine, sister: Your love to young Mirabel's no secret, I can assure you, but so public, that all your friends are ashamed on't.

Oriana. O' my word, then, my friends are very bashful; though I'm afraid, sir, that those people are not ashamed enough at their own crimes, who have so many blushes to spare for the faults of their neighbours.

Dug. Ay, but, sister, the people say——

Oriana. Pshaw! hang the people! they'll talk treason, and profane their Maker; must we therefore

infer, that our king is a tyrant, and religion a cheat? Lookye, brother, their court of enquiry is a tavern, and their informer, claret: They think as they drink, and swallow reputations like loches; a lady's health goes briskly round with the glass, but her honour is lost in the toast.

Dug. Ay, but, sister, there is still something——

Oriana. If there be something, brother, 'tis none of the people's something: Marriage is my thing, and I'll stick to't.

Dug. Marriage! Young Mirabel marry! he'll build churches sooner. Take heed, sister, though your honour stood proof to his home-bred assaults, you must keep a stricter guard for the future: He has now got the foreign air, and the Italian softness; his wit's improved by converse, his behaviour finished by observation, and his assurances confirmed by success. Sister, I can assure you, he has made his conquests; and 'tis a plague upon your sex, to be the soonest deceived by those very men that you know have been false to others.—But then, sister, he's as fickle—

Oriana. For God's sake, brother, tell me no more of his faults, for, if you do, I shall run mad for him: Say no more, sir; let me but get him into the bands of matrimony, I'll spoil his wandering, I warrant him; I'll do his business that way, never fear.

Dug. Well, sister, I won't pretend to understand the engagements between you and your lover; I expect, when you have need of my counsel or assistance, you will let me know more of your affairs. Mirabel is a gentleman, and as far as my honour and interest can reach, you may command me, to the furtherance of your happiness: In the mean time, sister, I have a great mind to make you a present of another humble servant; a fellow that I took up at Lyons, who has served me honestly ever since.

Oriana. Then why will you part with him?

Dug. He has gained so insufferably on my good-humour, that he's grown too familiar; but the fellow's cunning, and may be serviceable to you in your affair with Mirabel. Here he comes.

Enter PETIT.

Well, sir, have you been at Rousseau's?

Petit. Yes, sir, and who should I find there but Mr Mirabel and the captain, hatching as warmly over a tub of ice, as two hen pheasants over a brood—They would not let me bespeak any thing, for they had dined before I came.

Dug. Come, sir, you shall serve my sister; I shall still continue kind to you; and if your lady recommends your diligence, upon trial, I'll use my interest to advance you.—Wait on your lady home, Petit.

[*Exit.*

Petit. A chair! a chair! a chair!

Oriana. No, no, I'll walk home, 'tis but next door.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Tavern.

YOUNG MIRABEL *and* DURETETE *discovered, rising from Table.*

Y. Mir. Welcome to Paris once more, my dear captain; we have eat heartily, drank roundly, paid plentifully, and let it go for once. I liked every thing but our women; they looked so lean and tawdry, poor creatures! 'Tis a sure sign the army is not paid. Give me the plump Venetian, brisk and sanguine, that smiles upon me like the glowing sun, and meets

lips like sparkling wine, her person, shining as
glass, and spirit, like the foaming liquor.

ur. Ah, Mirabel, Italy I grant you; but for our
en here in France, they are such thin, brawn,
n jades, a man may as well make a bed-fellow of
ié chair.

. *Mir.* France! A light, unseasoned country, no-
but feathers, foppery, and fashions.—There's no-
on this side the Alps worth my humble service
—Ha, Roma la Santa!—Italy for my money!—
customs, gardens, buildings, paintings, music,
ies, wine, and women! the paradise of the
d!—not pestered with a parcel of precise, old,
y fellows, that would debar their children every
ure that they themselves are past the sense of;—
mend me to the Italian familiarity—"Here, son,
's fifty crowns, go, pay your girl her week's allow-
"

ur. Ay, these are your fathers for you, that un-
and the necessities of young men! not like our
y dads, who, because they cannot fish themselves,
d muddy the water, and spoil the sport of them
can. But now you talk of the plump, what d'ye
: of a Dutch woman?

Mir. A Dutch woman's too compact,—nay,
y thing among them is so; a Dutch man is thick,
tch woman is squab, a Dutch horse is round, a
h dog is short, a Dutch ship is broad bottomed;
in short, one would swear that the whole pro-
of the country were cast in the same mould with
cheeses.

ur. Ay, but, Mirabel, you have forgot the Eng-
adies.

Mir. The women of England were excellent, did
not take such insufferable pains to ruin what na-
has made so incomparably well; they would be
ate creatures indeed, could they but thoroughly
e at the French mien, or entirely let it alone; for

they only spoil a very good air of their own, by an awkward imitation of ours. But come, Duretete, let us mind the business in hand: Mistresses we must have, and must take up with the manufacture of the place, and upon a competent diligence, we shall find those in Paris shall match the Italians from top to toe.

Dur. Ay, Mirabel, you will do well enough, but what will become of your friend? you know, I am so plaguy bashful! so naturally an ass upon these occasions, that——

Y. Mir. Pshaw! you must be bolder, man! Travel three years, and bring home such a baby as bashfulness! A great lusty fellow, and a soldier; fie upon it!

Dur. Lookye, sir, I can visit, and I can ogle a little, —as thus, or thus now. Then I can kiss abundantly—but if they chance to give me a forbidding look, as some women, you know, have a devilish cast with their eyes—or if they cry, "What do you mean? what d'ye take me for? Fie, sir, remember who I am, sir—A person of quality to be used at this rate!"—'Egad, I'm struck as flat as a fryingpan.

Y. Mir. Words of course! never mind them: Turn you about upon your heel, with a jantée air; hum out the end of an old song; cut a cross caper, and at her again.

Dur. [*Imitates him.*] No, hang it, 'twill never do! —Oons! what did my father mean, by sticking me up in an university, or to think that I should gain any thing by my head, in a nation whose genius lies all in their heels!—Well, if ever I come to have children of my own, they shall have the education of the country —they shall learn to dance, before they can walk, and be taught to sing, before they can speak.

Y. Mir. Come, come, throw off that childish humour—put on assurance, there's no avoiding it; stand all hazards, thou'rt a stout, lusty fellow, and hast a

state;—look bluff, hector, you have a good side-
ce, a pretty impudent face; so, that's pretty well.
s fellow went abroad like an ox, and is returned
ı ass. [*Aside.*
·. Let me see now, how I look. [*Pulls out a
Glass, and looks on it.*] A side-box face, say
-'Egad, I don't like it, Mirabel! Fie, sir, don't
your friends; I could not wear such a face for
st countess in christendom.
Mir. Why can't you, blockhead, as well as I?
·. Why, thou hast impudence to set a good face
any thing: I would change half my gold for
ıy brass, with all my heart. Who comes here?
Mirabel, your father!

Enter OLD MIRABEL.

Mir. Where's Bob?—dear Bob?
Mir. Your blessing, sir?
Mir. My blessing! Damn ye, ye young rogue,
lid not you come to see your father first, sirrah?
ear boy, I am heartily glad to see thee, my dear
'faith!—Captain Duretete, by the blood of the
les, I'm yours! Well, my lads, ye look bravely,
—Bob, hast got any money left?
Mir. Not a farthing, sir.
Mir. Why, then, I won't gi' thee a souse.
Mir. I did but jest, here's ten pistoles.
Mir. Why, then, here's ten more: I love to be
able to those that don't want it.—Well, and
lo you like Italy, my boys?
Mir. O, the garden of the world, sir! Rome,
s, Venice, Milan, and a thousand others—all

Mir. Ay! say you so? And they say, that
is very fine too.
r. Indifferent, sir, very indifferent; a very scurvy
e most unwholesome to a French constitution in
orld.

Y. Mir. Pshaw! nothing on't: these rascally gazetteers have misinformed you.

Old Mir. Misinformed me! Oons, sir, were we not beaten there?

Y. Mir. Beaten, sir! we beaten!

Old Mir. Why, how was it, pray, sweet sir?

Y. Mir. Sir, the captain will tell you.

Dur. No, sir, your son will tell you.

Y. Mir. The captain was in the action, sir.

Dur. Your son saw more than I, sir, for he was a looker on.

Old Mir. Confound you both for a brace of cowards! here are no Germans to overhear you—why don't ye tell me how it was?

Y. Mir. Why, then, you must know, that we marched up a body of the finest, bravest, well-dressed fellows in the universe; our commanders at the head of us, all lace and feather, like so many beaux at a ball —I don't believe there was a man of them but could dance a charmer, morbleau!

Old Mir. Dance! very well, pretty fellows, 'faith!

Y. Mir. We capered up to their very trenches, and there saw, peeping over, a parcel of scare-crow, olive-coloured, gunpowder fellows, as ugly as the devil.

Dur. E'gad, I shall never forget the looks of them, while I have breath to fetch.

Y. Mir. They were so civil, indeed, as to welcome us with their cannon! but for the rest, we found them such unmannerly, rude, unsociable dogs, that we grew tired of their company, and so we e'en danced back again.

Old Mir. And did ye all come back?

Y. Mir. No; two or three thousand of us staid behind.

Old Mir. Why, Bob, why?

Y. Mir. Pshaw! because they could not come that night.

Dur. No, sir, because they could not come that night.

Y. Mir. But, come, sir, we were talking of something else; pray, how does your lovely charge, the fair Oriana?

Old Mir. Ripe, sir, just ripe; you'll find it better engaging with her than with the Germans, let me tell you. And what would you say, my young Mars, if I had a Venus for thee too? Come, Bob, your apartment is ready, and pray let your friend be my guest too; you shall command the house between ye, and I'll be as merry as the best of you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

OLD MIRABEL'S *House.*

ORIANA *and* BISARRE.

Bis. And you love this young rake, d'ye?

Oriana. Yes.

Bis. In spite of all his ill usage?

Oriana. I can't help it.

Bis. What's the matter wi' ye?

Oriana. Pshaw!

Bis. Um!—before that any young, lying, swearing, flattering, rakehelly fellow, should play such tricks with me—O, the devil take all your Cassandras and Cleopatras for me.—I warrant now, you'll play the fool when he comes, and say you love him! eh?

Oriana. Most certainly; I can't dissemble, Bisarre; besides, 'tis past that, we're contracted.

Bis. Contracted! alack-a-day, poor thing!—What, you have changed rings, or broken an old broadpiece between you! I would make a fool of any fellow in France. Well, I must confess, I do love a little coquetting, with all my heart! my business should be to break gold with my lover one hour, and crack my promise the next; he should find me one day with a prayer book in my hand, and with a play book another.—He should have my consent to buy the wedding ring, and the next moment would I ask him his name.

Oriana. O, my dear! were there no greater tie upon my heart, than there is upon my conscience, I would soon throw the contract out of doors; but the mischief on't is, I am so fond of being tied, that I'm forced to be just, and the strength of my passion keeps down the inclination of my sex.

Bis. But here's the old gentleman!

Enter OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Where's my wenches?—where's my two little girls? Eh! Have a care,—look to yourselves, 'faith, they're a coming—the travellers are a coming! Well! which of you two will be my daughter-in-law now? Bisarre, Bisarre, what say you, madcap? Mirabel is a pure, wild fellow.

Bis. I like him the worse.

Old Mir. You lie, hussy, you like him the better, indeed you do! What say you, my t'other little filbert, eh?

Oriana. I suppose the gentleman will chuse for himself, sir.

Old Mir. Why, that's discreetly said, and so he shall.

Enter MIRABEL *and* DURETETE; *they salute the Ladies.*

Bob, harkye, you shall marry one of these girls, sirrah?

Y. Mir. Sir, I'll marry them both, if you please.

Bis. [*Aside.*] He'll find that one may serve his turn.

Old Mir. Both! why, you young dog, d'ye banter me?—Come, sir, take your choice.—Duretete, you shall have your choice too, but Robin shall chuse first. —Come, sir, begin. Well! which d'ye like?

Y. Mir. Both.

Old Mir. But which will you marry?

Y. Mir. Neither.

Old Mir. Neither! Don't make me angry now, Bob—pray, don't make me angry.—Lookye, sirrah, if I don't dance at your wedding to-morrow, I shall be very glad to cry at your grave.

Y. Mir. That's a bull, father.

Old Mir. A bull! Why, how now, ungrateful sir; did I make thee a man, that thou shouldst make me a beast?

Y. Mir. Your pardon, sir; I only meant your expression.

Old Mir. Harkye, Bob, learn better manners to your father before strangers! I won't be angry this time: But oons, if ever you do't again, you rascal!—remember what I say. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. Pshaw! what does the old fellow mean by mewing me up here with a couple of green girls?—Come, Duretete, will you go?

Oriana. I hope, Mr Mirabel, you han't forgot—

Y. Mir. No, no, madam, I han't forgot, I have brought you a thousand little Italian curiosities; I'll assure you, madam, as far as a hundred pistoles would reach, I han't forgot the least circumstance.

Oriana. Sir, you misunderstand me.

Y. Mir. Odso! the relics, madam, from Rome. I

do remember, now, you made a vow of chastity before my departure; a vow of chastity, or something like it—was it not, madam?

Oriana. O sir, I'm answered at present. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. She was coming full mouth upon me with her contract—'Would I might despatch t'other!

Dur. Mirabel, that lady there, observe her, she's wondrous pretty, 'faith! and seems to have but few words; I like her mainly—speak to her, man, pr'ythee speak to her.

Y. Mir. Madam, here's a gentleman, who declares——

Dur. Madam, don't believe him, I declare nothing—What the devil do you mean, man?

Y. Mir. He says, madam, that you are as beautiful as an angel.

Dur. He tells a damned lie, madam! I say no such thing—Are you mad, Mirabel? Why, I shall drop down with shame.

Y. Mir. And so, madam, not doubting but your ladyship may like him as well as he does you, I think it proper to leave you together.

[*Going,* DURETETE *holds him.*

Dur. Hold, hold—Why, Mirabel, friend, sure you won't be so barbarous as to leave me alone! Pr'ythee, speak to her for yourself, as it were!—Lord, Lord, that a Frenchman should want impudence!

Y. Mir. You look mighty demure, madam.—She's deaf, captain.

Dur. I had much rather have her dumb.

Y. Mir. The gravity of your air, madam, promises some extraordinary fruits from your study, which moves us with curiosity to enquire the subject of your ladyship's contemplation.—Not a word!

Dur. I hope in the Lord she's speechless! if she be, she's mine this moment. Mirabel, d'ye think a woman's silence can be natural?

Bis. But the forms which logicians introduce, and

which proceed from simple enumeration, are dubitable, and proceed only upon admittance—

Y. Mir. Hoyty toyty! what a plague have we here? Plato in petticoats!

Dur. Ay, ay, let her go on, man; she talks in my own mother tongue.

Bis. 'Tis exposed to invalidity, from a contradictory instance; looks only upon common operations, and is infinite in its termination.

Y. Mir. Rare pedantry!

Dur. Axioms! axioms! self-evident principles!

Bis. Then the ideas wherewith the mind is pre-occupate.—O, gentlemen, I hope you'll pardon my cogitation! I was involved in a profound point of philosophy, but I shall discuss it somewhere else, being satisfied that the subject is not agreeable to your sparks, that profess the vanity of the times. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. Go thy way, good wife Bias!—Do you hear, Duretete? Dost hear this starched piece of austerity?

Dur. She's mine, man, she's mine—My own talent to a T.—I'll match her in dialectics, 'faith! I was seven years at the university, man, nursed up with Barbaro, Celarunt, Darii, Ferio, Baralipton. Did you ever know, man, that 'twas metaphysics made me an ass? It was, 'faith! Had she talked a word of singing, dancing, plays, fashions, or the like, I had foundered at the first step; but as she is—Mirabel, wish me joy!

Y. Mir. You don't mean marriage, I hope?

Dur. No, no, I am a man of more honour.

Y. Mir. Bravely resolved, captain! now for thy credit, warm me this frozen snowball—'twill be a conquest above the Alps!

Dur. But will you promise to be always near me?

Y. Mir. Upon all occasions, never fear.

Dur. Why, then, you shall see me, in two moments, make an induction from my love to her hand, from

her hand to her mouth, from her mouth to her heart, and so conclude in her bed, categorematice. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. Now the game begins, and my fool is entered.—But here comes one to spoil my sport; now shall I be teased to death with this old fashioned contract! I should love her too, if I might do it my own way, but she'll do nothing without witness, forsooth! I wonder women can be so immodest!

Enter ORIANA.

Well, madam, why d'ye follow me?

Oriana. Well, sir, why do you shun me?

Y. Mir. 'Tis my humour, madam, and I'm naturally swayed by inclination.

Oriana. Have you forgot our contract, sir?

Y. Mir. All I remember of that contract is, that it was made some three years ago, and that's enough, in conscience, to forget the rest on't.

Oriana. 'Tis sufficient, sir, to recollect the passing of it; for in that circumstance, I presume, lies the force of the obligation.

Y. Mir. Obligations, madam, that are forced upon the will, are no tie upon the conscience: I was a slave to my passion when I passed the instrument, but the recovery of my freedom makes the contract void.

Oriana. Come, Mr Mirabel, these expressions I expected from the raillery of your humour, but I hope for very different sentiments from your honour and generosity.

Y. Mir. Lookye, madam, as for my generosity, 'tis at your service, with all my heart: I'll keep you a coach and six horses, if you please, only permit me to keep my honour to myself. Consider, madam, you have no such thing among ye, and 'tis a main point of policy to keep no faith with reprobates—thou art a pretty little reprobate, and so get thee about thy business!

Oriana. Well, sir, even all this I will allow to the gaiety of your temper; your travels have improved your talent of talking, but they are not of force, I hope, to impair your morals.

Y. Mir. Morals! why, there 'tis again now!—I tell thee, child, there is not the least occasion for morals in any business between you and I. Don't you know that, of all commerce in the world, there is no such cozenage and deceit, as in the traffic between man and woman? We study all our lives long how to put tricks upon one another.—No fowler lays abroad more nets for his game, nor a hunter for his prey, than you do, to catch poor innocent men.—Why do you sit three or four hours at your toilet in a morning? only with a villainous design to make some poor fellow a fool before night. What d'ye sigh for?—What d'ye weep for?—What d'ye pray for? Why, for a husband: That is, you implore Providence to assist you in the just and pious design of making the wisest of his creatures a fool, and the head of the creation a slave.

Oriana. Sir, I am proud of my power, and am resolved to use it.

Y. Mir. Hold, hold, madam, not so fast—As you have variety of vanities to make coxcombs of us; so we have vows, oaths, and protestations, of all sorts and sizes, to make fools of you—And this, in short, my dear creature, is our present condition. I have sworn and lied briskly to gain my ends of you; your ladyship has patched and painted violently to gain your ends of me; but, since we are both disappointed, let us make a drawn battle, and part clear on both sides.

Oriana. With all my heart, sir! Give me up my contract, and I'll never see your face again.

Y. Mir. Indeed, I won't, child!

Oriana. What, sir! neither do one nor t'other?

Y. Mir. No, you shall die a maid, unless you please to be otherwise upon my terms.

Oriana. What do you intend by this, sir?

Y. Mir. Why, to starve you into compliance;—lookye, you shall never marry any man; and you had as good let me do you a kindness as a stranger.

Oriana. Sir, you're a ——

Y. Mir. What am I, ma'am?

Oriana. A villain, sir.

Y. Mir. I'm glad on't—I never knew an honest fellow in my life, but was a villain upon these occasions. Han't you drawn yourself, now, into a very pretty dilemma? Ha! ha! ha! the poor lady has made a vow of virginity, when she thought of making a vow to the contrary. Was ever poor woman so cheated into chastity?

Oriana. Sir, my fortune is equal to yours, my friends as powerful, and both shall be put to the test to do me justice.

Y. Mir. What! you'll force me to marry you, will ye?

Oriana. Sir, the law shall.

Y. Mir. But the law can't force me to do any thing else, can it?

Oriana. Pshaw, I despise thee—Monster!

Y. Mir. Kiss and be friends, then—Don't cry, child, and you shall have your sugar plumb—Come, madam, d'ye think I could be so unreasonable as to make you fast all your life long! No, I did but jest, you shall have your liberty—here, take your contract, and give me mine.

Oriana. No, I won't.

Y. Mir. Eh! What, is the girl a fool?

Oriana. No, sir, you shall find me cunning enough to do myself justice; and since I must not depend upon your love, I'll be revenged, and force you to marry me out of spite.

Y. Mir. Then I'll beat thee out of spite, and make a most confounded husband!

Oriana. O, sir, I shall match ye! A good husband makes a good wife at any time.

Y. Mir. I'll rattle down your china about your ears.

Oriana. And I'll rattle about the city to run you in debt for more.

Y. Mir. I'll tear the furbelow off your clothes, and when you swoon for vexation, you shan't have a penny to buy a bottle of hartshorn.

Oriana. And you, sir, shall have hartshorn in abundance.

Y. Mir. I'll keep as many mistresses as I have coach horses.

Oriana. And I'll keep as many gallants as you have grooms.

Y. Mir. But, sweet madam, there is such a thing as a divorce!

Oriana. But, sweet sir, there is such a thing as alimony! so divorce on, and spare not. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. Ay, that separate maintenance is the devil—there's their refuge!—O' my conscience, one would take cuckoldom for a meritorious action, because the women are so handsomely rewarded for it. [*Exit.*

Enter DURETETE *and* PETIT.

Dur. And she's mighty peevish, you say?

Petit. O sir, she has a tongue as long as my leg, and talks so crabbedly, you would think she always spoke Welsh.

Dur. That's an odd language, methinks, for her philosophy.

Petit. But sometimes she will sit you half a day without speaking a word, and talk oracles all the while by the wrinkles of her forehead, and the motions of her eyebrows.

Dur. Nay, I shall match her in philosophical ogles, 'faith!—that's my talent: I can talk best, you must know, when I say nothing.

Petit. But d'ye ever laugh, sir?

Dur. Laugh? Won't she endure laughing?

Petit. Why, she's a critic, sir; she hates a jest, for fear it should please her; and nothing keeps her in humour, but what gives her the spleen.—And then, for logic, and all that, you know——

Dur. Ay, ay, I'm prepared; I have been practising hard words and no sense this hour, to entertain her.

Petit. Then place yourself behind this screen, that you may have a view of her behaviour before you begin.

Dur. I long to engage her, lest I should forget my lesson.

Petit. Here she comes, sir—I must fly.

[*Exit* PETIT, *and* DURETETE *stands peeping behind the Curtain.*

Enter BISARRE *and* MAID.

Bis. [*With a Book.*] Pshaw! hang books! they sour our temper, spoil our eyes, and ruin our complexions. [*Throws away the Book.*

Dur. Eh? the devil such a word there is in all Aristotle!

Bis. Come, wench, let's be free—call in the fiddle, there's nobody near us.

Dur. 'Would to the Lord there was not!

Bis. Here, friend, a minuet——[*Music.*] Quicker time—ha—'would we had a man or two!

Dur. [*Stealing away.*] You shall have the devil sooner, my dear, dancing philosopher!

Bis. Uds my life!—Here's one!

[*Runs to* DURETETE, *and hales him back.*

Dur. Is all my learned preparation come to this?

Bis. Come, sir, don't be ashamed; that's my good boy—you're very welcome, we wanted such a one—Come, strike up—[*Dance.*] I know you dance well, sir, you're finely shaped for't—Come, come, sir;—quick, quick! you miss the time else.

Dur. But, madam, I come to talk with you.

Bis. Ay, ay, talk as you dance, talk as you dance, —come.

Dur. But we were talking of dialectics—

Bis. Hang dialectics !—[*Music.*] Mind the time—quicker, sirrah !—Come—and how d'ye find yourself now, sir ?

Dur. In a fine breathing sweat, doctor.

Bis. All the better, patient, all the better;—Come, sir, sing now, sing, I know you sing well : I see you have a singing face—a heavy, dull, sonata face.

Dur. Who, I sing ?

Bis. O you're modest, sir—but come, sit down closer—closer. Here, a bottle of wine ! [*Exit* MAID, *and returns with Wine.*] Come, sir—sing, sir.

Dur. But, madam, I came to talk with you.

Bis. O sir, you shall drink first.—Come, fill me a bumper—Here, sir, bless the king !

Dur. 'Would I were out of his dominions !—By this light, she'll make me drunk too !

Bis. O pardon me, sir, you shall do me right—fill it higher.—Now, sir, can you drink a health under your leg ?

Dur. Rare philosophy that, 'faith !

Bis. Come, off with it to the bottom—Now, how d'ye like me, sir ?

Dur. O, mighty well, madam !

Bis. You see how a woman's fancy varies ! sometimes, splenetic and heavy, then, gay and frolicsome. —And how d'ye like the humour ?

Dur. Good madam, let me sit down to answer you, for I am heartily tired.

Bis. Fie upon't ! a young man, and tired ! up, for shame, and walk about !—Action becomes us—a little faster, sir.—What d'ye think now of my Lady La Pale, and Lady Coquet, the duke's fair daughter ? Ha ! Are they not brisk lasses ? Then there is black Mrs Bellair, and brown Mrs Bellface !

Dur. They are all strangers to me, madam.

Bis. But let me tell you, sir, that brown is not always despicable—O Lard, sir, if young Mrs Bagatell had kept herself single till this time o'day, what a beauty there had been! And then, you know the charming Mrs Monkeylove, the fair gem of St Germain's!

Dur. Upon my soul, I don't!

Bis. And then you must have heard of the English beau, Spleenamore, how unlike a gentleman——

Dur. Hey!—not a syllable on't, as I hope to be saved, madam!

Bis. No! Why, then, play me a jig;—[*Music.*]—Come, sir.

Dur. By this light, I cannot! 'faith, madam, I have sprained my leg!

Bis. Then sit you down, sir;—and now tell me what's your business with me? What's your errand? Quick, quick, despatch!—Odso, may be, you are some gentleman's servant, that has brought me a letter, or a haunch of venison?

Dur. 'Sdeath, madam, do I look like a carrier?

Bis. O, cry you mercy, I saw you just now; I mistook you, upon my word! you are one of the travelling gentlemen—and pray, sir, how do all our impudent friends in Italy?

Dur. Madam, I came to wait on you with a more serious intention than your entertainment has answered.

Bis. Sir, your intention of waiting on me was the greatest affront imaginable, however your expressions may turn it to a compliment: Your visit, sir, was intended as a prologue to a very scurvy play, of which Mr Mirabel and you so handsomely laid the plot.—"Marry! No, no, I am a man of more honour."—Where's your honour? Where's your courage now? Ads my life, sir, I have a great mind to kick you!—Go, go to your fellow-rake now, rail at my sex, and get drunk for vexation, and write a lampoon—But I

must have you to know, sir, that my reputation is above the scandal of a libel, my virtue is sufficiently approved to those whose opinion is my interest: and, for the rest, let them talk what they will; for, when I please, I'll be what I please, in spite of you and all mankind; and so, my dear man of honour, if you be tired, con over this lesson, and sit there till I come to you. [*Runs off.*

Dur. Tum ti dum. [*Sings.*] Ha! ha! ha! "Ad's my life, I have a great mind to kick you!"—Oons and confusion! [*Starts up.*] Was ever man so abused! —Ay, Mirabel set me on.

Enter PETIT.

Petit. Well, sir, how d'ye find yourself?

Dur. You son of a nine-eyed whore, d'ye come to abuse me? I'll kick you with a vengeance, you dog!

[PETIT *runs off, and* DURETETE *after him.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

OLD MIRABEL'S *House.*

Enter OLD *and* YOUNG MIRABEL, *meeting.*

Old Mir. Bob, come hither, Bob.

Y. Mir. Your pleasure, sir?

Old Mir. Are not you a great rogue, sirrah?

Y. Mir. That's a little out of my compre
sir; for I've heard say, that I resemble my
Old Mir. Your father is your very humble
I tell thee what, child, thou art a very prett
and I love thee heartily; and a very great vil
I hate thee mortally.

Y. Mir. Villain, sir! Then I must be a
pudent one; for I can't recollect any passag
life that I'm ashamed of.

Old Mir. Come hither, my dear friend;
this picture? [*Shews him a little*

Y. Mir. Oriana's? Pshaw!

Old Mir. What, sir, won't you look upon't
dear Bob, pr'ythee come hither now—Dost w
money, child?

Y. Mir. No, sir.

Old Mir. Why, then, here's some for the
here now—How canst thou be so hard-hea
unnatural, unmannerly rascal, (don't mist
child, I a'n't angry) as to abuse this tender
good-natured, dear rogue?—Why, she sighs
and cries for thee, pouts for thee, and snubs
the poor little heart of it is like to burst—
my dear boy, be goodnatured, like your owi
be now—and then see here, read this——th
of the lovely Oriana, with thirty thousand
her portion—Thirty thousand pound, you dog
thousand pound, you rogue! How dare you
lady with thirty thousand pound, you impud
cal?

Y. Mir. Will you hear me speak, sir?

Old Mir. Hear you speak, sir! If you h
thousand tongues, you could not out-talk thi
sand pound, sir.

Y. Mir. Nay, sir, if you won't hear me,
gone, sir! I'll take post for Italy this momen

Old Mir. Ah, the fellow knows I won't
him! Well, sir, what have you to say?

Y. Mir. The universal reception, sir, that marriage has had in the world, is enough to fix it for a public good, and to draw every body into the common cause; but there are some constitutions, like some instruments, so peculiarly singular, that they make tolerable music by themselves, but never do well in a concert.

Old Mir. Why, this is reason, I must confess, but yet it is nonsense too; for though you should reason like an angel, if you argue yourself out of a good estate, you talk like a fool.

Y. Mir. But, sir, if you bribe me into bondage with the riches of Crœsus, you leave me but a beggar, for want of my liberty.

Old Mir. Was ever such a perverse fool heard? 'Sdeath, sir! why did I give you education? was it to dispute me out of my senses? Of what colour, now, is the head of this cane? You'll say, 'tis white, and, ten to one, make me believe it too——I thought that young fellows studied to get money.

Y. Mir. No, sir, I have studied to despise it; my reading was not to make me rich, but happy, sir.

Old Mir. There he has me again, now! But, sir, did not I marry to oblige you?

Y. Mir. To oblige me, sir! in what respect, pray?

Old Mir. Why, to bring you into the world, sir; wa'n't that an obligation?

Y. Mir. And because I would have it still an obligation, I avoid marriage.

Old Mir. How is that, sir?

Y. Mir. Because I would not curse the hour I was born.

Old Mir. Lookye, friend; you may persuade me out of my design, but I'll command you out of yours; and though you may convince my reason that you are in the right, yet there is an old attendant of sixty-three, called positiveness, which you, nor all the wits in Italy, shall ever be able to shake: so, sir,

you're a wit, and I'm a father: you may talk, but I' be obeyed.

Y. Mir. This it is to have the son a finer gentlem than the father: they first give us breeding, that th don't understand; then they turn us out of doors, b cause we are wiser than themselves. But I'm a litt aforehand with the old gentleman. [*Aside.*]—Sir, y have been pleased to settle a thousand pound sterli a year upon me; in return of which, I have a ve great honour for you and your family, and shall tal care that your only and beloved son shall do nothi to make him hate his father or to hang himself. S dear sir, I'm your very humble servant. [*Runs o*

Old Mir. Here, sirrah! rogue! Bob! villain!

Enter DUGARD.

Dug. Ah, sir! 'tis but what he deserves.

Old Mir. 'Tis false, sir! he don't deserve it: wh have you to say against my boy, sir?

Dug. I shall only repeat your own words.

Old Mir. What have you to do with my words I have swallowed my words already; I have eat them up.—I say, that Bob's an honest fellow, and wl dares deny it?

Enter BISARRE.

Bis. That dare I, sir:—I say, that your son is wild, foppish, whimsical, impertinent coxcomb; an were I abused as this gentleman's sister is, I wou make it an Italian quarrel, and poison the whole f mily.

Dug. Come, sir, 'tis no time for trifling; my sist is abused; you are made sensible of the affront, an your honour is concerned to see her redressed.

Old Mir. Lookye, Mr Dugard, good words farthest. I will do your sister justice, but it must after my own rate; nobody must abuse my son b

myself; for, although Robin be a sad dog, yet he's nobody's puppy but my own.

Bis. Ay, that's my sweet-natured, kind, old gentleman—[*Wheedling him.*] We will be good, then, if you'll join with us in the plot.

Old Mir. Ah, you coaxing young baggage! what plot can you have to wheedle a fellow of sixty-three?

Bis. A plot that sixty-three is only good for: to bring other people together, sir. You must act the Spaniard, because your son will least suspect you; and if he should, your authority protects you from a quarrel, to which Oriana is unwilling to expose her brother.

Old Mir. And what part will you act in the business, madam?

Bis. Myself, sir; my friend is grown a perfect changeling; these foolish hearts of ours spoil our heads presently; the fellows no sooner turn knaves, but we turn fools; but I am still myself, and he may expect the most severe usage from me, because I neither love him nor hate him. [*Exit.*

Old Mir. Well said, Mrs Paradox!—But, sir, who must open the matter to him?

Dug. Petit, sir; who is our engineer general; and here he comes.

Enter PETIT.

Petit. O, sir, more discoveries! Are all friends about us?

Dug. Ay, ay, speak freely.

Petit. You must know, sir,——od's my life, I'm out of breath!—You must know, sir,—you must know—

Old Mir. What the devil must we know, sir?

Petit. That I have [*Pants and blows.*] bribed, sir, bribed—your son's secretary of state.

Old Mir. Secretary of state!—who's that, for Heaven's sake?

Petit. His valet de chambre, sir. You must know, sir, that the intrigue lay folded up in his master's clothes; and, when he went to dust the embroidered suit, the secret flew out of the right pocket of his coat, in a whole swarm of your crambo songs, short-footed odes, and long-legged pindarics.

Old Mir. Impossible!

Petit. Ah, sir, he has loved her all along; there was Oriana in every line, but he hates marriage. Now, sir, this plot will stir up his jealousy, and we shall know, by the strength of that, how to proceed farther.

Come, sir, let's about it with speed;
'Tis expedition gives our king the sway;
For expedition to the French give way;
Swift to attack, or swift—to run away. [*Exeunt.*

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL *and* BISARRE, *passing carelessly by one another.*

Bis. [*Aside.*] I wonder what she can see in this fellow, to like him?

Y. Mir. [*Aside.*] I wonder what my friend can see in this girl, to admire her?

Bis. [*Aside.*] A wild, foppish, extravagant, rake-hell!

Mir. [*Aside.*] A light, whimsical, impertinent, madcap!

Bis. Whom do you mean, sir?

Y. Mir. Whom do you mean, madam?

Bis. A fellow, that has nothing left to re-establish him for a human creature, but a prudent resolution to hang himself!

Y. Mir. There is a way, madam, to force me to that resolution.

Bis. I'll do it, with all my heart.

Y. Mir. Then you must marry me.

Bis. Lookye, sir, don't think your ill manners to

me, shall excuse your ill usage of my friend; nor, by fixing a quarrel here, to divert my zeal for the absent; for I'm resolved, nay, I come prepared, to make you a panegyric, that shall mortify your pride, like any modern dedication.

Y. Mir. And I, madam, like a true modern patron, shall hardly give you thanks for your trouble.

Bis. Come, sir, to let you see what little foundation you have for your dear sufficiency, I'll take you to pieces.

Y. Mir. And what piece will you chuse?

Bis. Your heart, to be sure; because I should get presently rid on't: your courage I would give to a Hector, your wit to a lewd playmaker, your honour to an attorney, your body to the physicians, and your soul to its master.

Y. Mir. I had the oddest dream last night of the Duchess of Burgundy: Methought the furbelows of her gown were pinned up so high behind, that I could not see her head for her tail.

Bis. The creature don't mind me!—Do you think, sir, that your humorous impertinence can divert me? No, sir, I'm above any pleasure that you can give, but that of seeing you miserable. And mark me, sir; my friend, my injured friend, shall yet be doubly happy, and you shall be a husband, as much as the rites of marriage, and the breach of them, can make you.

[*Here* MIRABEL *pulls out a Virgil, and reads to himself, while she speaks.*

Mir. [Reading.] *At Regina dolos, (quis fallere possit amantem?)*
Dissimulare etiam sperâsti, perfide tantum—

Very true.

Posse nefas.

By your favour, friend Virgil, 'twas but a rascally trick of your hero, to forsake poor pug so inhumanly.

Bis. I don't know what to say to him. The devil ——what's Virgil to us, sir?

Mir. Very much, madam; the most apropos in the world—for, what should I chop upon, but the very place where the perjured rogue of a lover, and the forsaken lady, are battling it tooth and nail! Come, madam, spend your spirits no longer; we'll take an easier method: I'll be Æneas now, and you shall be Dido, and we'll rail by book. Now for you, Madam Dido:

Nec te noster amor, nec te data dextera quondam,
Nec meritura tenet crudeli funere Dido——

Ah, poor Dido! [*Looking at her.*

Bis. Rudeness! affronts! impatience! I could almost start out, even to manhood, and want but a weapon as long as his to fight him upon the spot. What shall I say?

Mir. Now she rants.

Quæ quibus anteferam? jam jam nec maxima Juno.

Bis. A man! No, the woman's birth was spirited away.

Mir. Right, right, madam, the very words.

Bis. And some pernicious elf left in the cradle, with human shape, to palliate growing mischief.

[*Both speak together, and raise their Voices by Degrees.*

Mir. *Perfide, sed duris genuit te cautibus horrens*
Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admorunt ubera tigres.

Bis. Go, sir, fly to your midnight revels——

Mir. Excellent!

I sequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas,
Spero equidem mediis, si quid pia Numina possunt.
[Together again.

Bis. Converse with imps of darkness of your make; your nature starts at justice, and shivers at the touch of virtue.—Now, the devil take his impudence! He vexes me so, I don't know whether to cry or laugh at him.

Mir. Bravely performed, my dear Lybian! I'll write the tragedy of Dido, and you shall act the part; but you do nothing at all, unless you fret yourself into a fit; for here the poor lady is stifled with vapours, drops into the arms of her maids, and the cruel, barbarous, deceitful wanderer is, in the very next line, called pious Æneas.—There's authority for ye.

Sorry indeed Æneas stood,
To see her in a pout;
But Jove himself, who ne'er thought good
To stay a second bout,
Commands him off, with all his crew,
And leaves poor Dy, as I leave you. [*Runs off.*

Bis. Go thy ways, for a dear, mad, deceitful, agreeable fellow! O' my conscience, I must excuse Oriana.

That lover soon his angry fair disarms,
Whose slighting pleases, and whose faults are charms.
[*Exit.*

Enter PETIT; *runs about to every Door, and knocks.*

Petit. Mr Mirabel! Sir, where are you? no where to be found?

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL.

Y. Mir. What's the matter, Petit?

Petit. Most critically met!—Ah, sir, that one w has followed the game so long, and brought the po hare just under his paws, should let a mungrel c chop in, and run away with the puss!

Y. Mir. If your worship can get out of your al gories, be pleased to tell me, in three words, what y mean.

Petit. Plain, plain, sir! Your mistress and mine going to be married!

Y. Mir. I believe you lie, sir.

Petit. Your humble servant, sir. [*Goin*

Y. Mir. Come hither, Petit. Married, say you

Petit. No, sir, 'tis no matter: I only thought to you a service; but I shall take care how I confer m favours for the future.

Y. Mir. Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons.

[*Bowing lo*

Petit. 'Tis enough, sir.—I come to tell you, si that Oriana is this moment to be sacrificed; marrie past redemption!

Y. Mir. I understand her; she'll take a husband o of spite to me, and then, out of love to me, she wi make him a cuckold! But who is the happy man?

Petit. A lord, sir.

Y. Mir. I'm her ladyship's most humble servan Now must I be a constant attender at my lord's leve to work my way to my lady's couchee——A cou tess, I presume, sir——

Petit. A Spanish count, sir, that Mr Dugard kne abroad, is come to Paris, saw your mistress yesterda marries her to-day, and whips her into Spain to-mo row.

Y. Mir. Ay, is it so? and must I follow my cuckol over the Pyrenees? Had she married within the pr cincts of a billet-doux, I would be the man to lea her to church; but, as it happens, I'll forbid th banns. Where is this mighty don?

Petit. Have a care, sir; he's a rough cross-graine

piece, and there's no tampering with him. Would you apply to Mr Dugard, or the lady herself, something might be done, for it is in despite to you that the business is carried so hastily. Odso, sir, here he comes! I must be gone. [*Exit.*

Enter OLD MIRABEL, *dressed in a Spanish Habit, leading* ORIANA.

Oriana. Good my lord, a nobler choice had better suited your lordship's merit. My person, rank, and circumstance, expose me as the public theme of raillery, and subject me so to injurious usage, my lord, that I can lay no claim to any part of your regard, except your pity.

Old Mir. Breathes he vital air, that dares presume,
With rude behaviour, to profane such excellence?
Show me the man——
And you shall see how my sudden revenge
Shall fall upon the head of such presumption.
Is this thing one?

[*Strutting up to* YOUNG MIRABEL.

Y. Mir. Sir!

Oriana. Good my lord.

Old Mir. If he, or any he!

Oriana. Pray, my lord, the gentleman's a stranger.

Old Mir. O, your pardon, sir,—but if you had—remember, sir,—the lady now is mine, her injuries are mine; therefore, sir, you understand me——Come, madam.

[*Leads* ORIANA *to the Door; she goes off;* YOUNG MIRABEL *runs to his Father, and pulls him by the Sleeve.*

Y. Mir. *Ecoute, Monsieur le Count.*

Old Mir. Your business, sir?

Y. Mir. Boh!

Old Mir. Boh! what language is that, sir?

Y. Mir. Spanish, my lord.

Old Mir. What d'ye mean?

Y. Mir. This, sir. [*Trips up his Heels.*

Old Mir. A very concise quarrel, truly——I'll bully him.—*Trinidade! Seigneur*, give me fair play. [*Offering to rise.*

Y. Mir. By all means, sir. [*Takes away his Sword.*] Now, seigneur, where's that bombast look, and fustian face, your countship wore just now? [*Strikes him.*

Old Mir. The rogue quarrels well, very well; my own son right!—But hold, sirrah, no more jesting; I'm your father, sir! your father!

Y. Mir. My father! Then, by this light, I could find in my heart to pay thee. [*Aside.*]—Is the fellow mad? Why, sure, sir, I han't frighted you out of your senses?

Old Mir. But you have, sir!

Y. Mir. Then I'll beat them into you again. [*Offers to strike him.*

Old Mir. Why, rogue!—Bob! dear Bob! don't you know me, child?

Y. Mir. Ha! ha! ha! the fellow's downright distracted! Thou miracle of impudence! wouldst thou make me believe, that such a grave gentleman as my father would go a masquerading thus? That a person of threescore and three would run about, in a fool's coat, to disgrace himself and family? Why, you impudent villain, do you think I will suffer such an affront to pass upon my honoured father, my worthy father, my dear father? 'Sdeath, sir! mention my father but once again, and I'll send your soul to thy grandfather this minute! [*Offering to stab him.*

Old Mir. Well, well, I am not your father.

Y. Mir. Why, then, sir, you are the saucy, hectoring Spaniard, and I'll use you accordingly.

Enter DUGARD, ORIANA, MAID, *and* PETIT. DUGARD *runs to* YOUNG MIRABEL, *the rest to the Old Gentleman.*

Dug. Fie, fie, Mirabel! murder your father!

Y. Mir. My father? What, is the whole family mad? Give me way, sir, I won't be held.

Old Mir. No? nor I neither: Let me begone, pray. [*Offering to go.*

Y. Mir. My father!

Old Mir. Ay, you dog's face: I am your father, for I have borne as much for thee, as your mother ever did.

Y. Mir. O ho! then this was a trick, it seems, a design, a contrivance, a stratagem!—Oh, how my bones ache!

Old Mir. Your bones, sirrah! why yours?

Y. Mir. Why, sir, han't I been beating my own flesh and blood all this while? O, madam, [*To* ORIANA.] I wish your ladyship joy of your new dignity. Here was a contrivance indeed!

Oriana. Pray, sir, don't insult the misfortunes of your own creating.

Dug. My prudence will be counted cowardice, if I stand tamely now.—[*Comes up between* YOUNG MIRABEL *and his Sister.*] Well, sir!

Y. Mir. Well, sir! Do you take me for one of your tenants, sir, that you put on your landlord's face at me!

Dug. On what presumption, sir, dare you assume thus? [*Draws.*

Old Mir. What's that to you, sir? [*Draws.*

Petit. Help! help! the lady faints!

[ORIANA *falls into her Maid's Arms.*

Y. Mir. Vapours! vapours! she'll come to herself: If it be an angry fit, a dram of assa fœtida—If jealousy, hartshorn in water—if the mother, burnt feathers—If grief, ratafia—If it be straight stays, or corns, there's nothing like a dram of plain brandy. [*Exit.*

Oriana. Hold off, give me air——O, my brother! would you preserve my life, endanger not your own; would you defend my reputation, leave it to itself;

'tis a dear vindication that's purchased by the sword; for, though our champion proves victorious, yet our honour is wounded.

Old Mir. Ay, and your lover may be wounded, that's another thing. But I think you are pretty brisk again, my child.

Oriana. Ay, sir, my indisposition was only a pretence to divert the quarrel; the capricious taste of your sex, excuses this artifice in ours. [*Exit.*

Petit. Come, Mr Dugard, take courage; there is a way still left to fetch him again.

Old Mir. Sir, I'll have no plot that has any relation to Spain.

Dug. I scorn all artifice whatsoever; my sword shall do her justice.

Petit. Pretty justice, truly! Suppose you run him through the body, you run her through the heart at the same time.

Old Mir. And me through the head. Rot your sword, sir, we'll have plots! Come, Petit, let's hear.

Petit. What if she pretended to go into a nunnery, and so bring him about to declare himself?

Dug. That, I must confess, has a face.

Old Mir. A face! a face like an angel, sir! Ad's, my life, sir, 'tis the most beautiful plot in Christendom! We'll about it immediately. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

OLD MIRABEL'S *House.*

Enter OLD MIRABEL *and* DUGARD.

Dug. The Lady Abbess is my relation, and privy to the plot.

Old Mir. Ay, ay, this nunnery will bring him about, I warrant ye.

Enter DURETETE.

Dur. Here, where are ye all?—O, Mr Mirabel! you have done fine things for your posterity—And you, Mr Dugard, may come to answer this—I come to demand my friend at your hands; restore him, sir, or—— [*To* OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Restore him! What, d'ye think I have got him in my trunk, or my pocket?

Dur. Sir, he's mad, and you are the cause on't.

Old Mir. That may be; for I was as mad as he when I begot him.

Dug. Mad, sir! What d'ye mean?

Dur. What do you mean, sir, by shutting up your sister yonder, to talk like a parrot through a cage? or a decoy-duck, to draw others into the snare? Your son, sir, because she has deserted him, he has forsaken the world; and, in three words, has——

Old Mir. Hanged himself!

Dur. The very same—turned friar!

Old Mir. You lie, sir! 'tis ten times worse. Bob turned friar!—Why should the fellow shave his foolish crown, when the same razor may cut his throat?

Dur. If you have any command, or you any interest over him, lose not a minute: He has thrown himself into the next monastery, and has ordered me to pay off his servants, and discharge his equipage.

Old Mir. Let me alone to ferret him out: I'll sacrifice the Abbot, if he receives him; I'll try whether the spiritual or the natural father has the most right to the child.—But, dear captain, what has he done with his estate?

Dur. Settled it upon the church, sir.

Old Mir. The church! Nay, then the devil wo'nt get him out of their clutches——Ten thousand livres a year upon the church! 'Tis downright sacrilege—Come, gentlemen, all hands to work: for half that sum, one of these monasteries shall protect you a traitor from the law, a rebellious wife from her husband, and a disobedient son from his own father.

[*Exit.*

Dug. But will ye persuade me that he's gone to a monastery?

Dur. Is your sister gone to the Filles Repenties? I tell you, sir, she's not fit for the society of repenting maids.

Dug. Why so, sir?

Dur. Because she's neither one nor t'other; she's too old to be a maid, and too young to repent.

[*Exit*—DUGARD *after him.*

SCENE II.

The Inside of a Monastery.

Enter ORIANA, *in a Nun's Habit, and* BISARRE.

Oriana. I hope, Bisarre, there is no harm in jesting with this religious habit.

Bis. To me, the greatest jest in the habit is taking it in earnest.

Oriana. But I'm reconciled, methinks, to the mortification of a nunnery; because I fancy the habit becomes me.

Bis. A well-contrived mortification, truly, that makes a woman look ten times handsomer than she did before!—Ay, my dear, were there any religion in becoming dress, our sex's devotion were rightly placed; for our toilets would do the work of the altar; we should all be canonized.

Oriana. But don't you think there is a great deal of merit in dedicating a beautiful face and person to the service of religion?

Bis. Not half so much as devoting them to a pretty fellow. Come, come, mind your business. Mirabel loves you, 'tis now plain, and hold him to't; give fresh orders that he shan't see you; we get more by hiding our faces, sometimes, than by exposing them: a very mask, you see, whets desire; but a pair of keen eyes, through an iron grate, fire double upon them, with view and disguise. But I must begone upon my affairs; I have brought my captain about again.

Oriana. But why will you trouble yourself with that coxcomb?

Bis. Because he is a coxcomb: had I not better have a lover like him, that I can make an ass of, than a lover like yours, to make a fool of me? [*Knocking below.*] A message from Mirabel, I'll lay my life! [*She runs to the Door.*] Come hither! run, thou charming nun, come hither!

Oriana. What's the news? [*Runs to her.*

Bis. Don't you see who's below?

Oriana. I see nobody but a friar.

Bis. Ah, thou poor blind Cupid! a friar! Don't you see a villainous genteel mien, under that cloak of hypocrisy?

Oriana. As I live, Mirabel turned friar! I hope, in Heaven, he's not in earnest.

Bis. In earnest! Ha! ha! ha! are you in earnest? Remember what I say, if you would yield to advantage, and hold out the attack; to draw him on, keep him off, to be sure.

The cunning gamesters never gain too fast,
But lose at first, to win the more at last. [*Exit.*

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL, *in a Friar's Habit.*

Y. Mir. 'Save you, sister—Your brother, young lady, having a regard for your soul's health, has sent me to prepare you for the sacred habit, by confession.

Oriana. My brother's care I own; and to you, sacred sir, I confess, that the great crying sin, which I have long indulged, and now prepare to expiate, was love. My morning thoughts, my evening prayers, my daily musings, nightly cares, was love!

Y. Mir. She's downright stark mad in earnest! Death and confusion, I have lost her! [*Aside.*]—You confess your fault, madam, in such moving terms, that I could almost be in love with the sin.

Oriana. Take care, sir; crimes, like virtues, are their own rewards: My chief delight became my only grief; he, in whose breast I thought my heart secure, turned robber, and despoiled the treasure that he kept.

Y. Mir. Perhaps that treasure he esteemed so much, that, like the miser, though afraid to use it, he reserves it safe.

Oriana. No, holy father: Who can be miser in another's wealth, that's prodigal of his own? His heart was open, shared to all he knew, and what, alas! must then become of mine! But the same eyes that drew this passion in, shall send it out in tears, to which now hear my vow——

Y. Mir. [*Discovering himself.*] No, my fair angel! Here, on my knees, behold the criminal, that vows repentance his. [*Kneels.*] Ha! no concern upon her!

Enter OLD MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Where, where's this counterfeit nun?

Oriana. Madness! confusion! I'm ruined!

Y. Mir. What do I hear? [*Puts on his Hood.*] What did you say, sir?

Old Mir. I say she's a counterfeit, and you may be another, for aught I know, sir: I have lost my child by these tricks, sir.

Y. Mir. What tricks, sir?

Old Mir. By a pretended trick, sir. A contrivance to bring my son to reason, and it has made him stark mad; I have lost him, and a thousand pound a year.

Y. Mir. [*Discovering himself.*] My dear father, I'm your most humble servant.

Old Mir. My dear boy! [*Runs and kisses him.*]—Welcome, *ex inferis*, my dear boy! 'tis all a trick, she's no more a nun than I am.

Y. Mir. No!

Old Mir. The devil a bit.

Y. Mir. Then kiss me again, my dear dad, for the most happy news—And now, most venerable holy sister, [*Kneels.*

Your mercy and your pardon I implore,
For the offence of asking it before.

Lookye, my dear counterfeiting nun, take my advice; be a nun in good earnest; women make the best nuns always, when they can't do otherwise.

Oriana. O, sir! how unhappily have you destroyed what was so near perfection! He is the counterfeit, that has deceived you.

Old Mir. Ha! Lookye, sir, I recant; she is a nun.

Y. Mir. Sir, your humble servant; then I'm a friar this moment.

Old Mir. Was ever an old fool so bantered by a brace o' young ones! Hang you both! you're both counterfeits, and my plot's spoiled, that's all.

Oriana. Shame and confusion, love, anger, and disappointment, will work my brain to madness!

[*Takes off her Habit—Exit.*

Y. Mir. Ay, ay, throw by the rags; they have served a turn for us both, and they shall e'en go off together. [*Takes off his Habit.*

[*Exit, throwing away the Habit.*

SCENE III.

OLD MIRABEL'S *House.*

Enter DURETETE, *with a Letter.*

Dur. [Reads.] *My rudeness was only a proof of your humour, which I have found so agreeable, that I own*

myself penitent, and willing to make any reparation upon your first appearance to BISARRE.

Mirabel swears she loves me, and this confirms it; then farewell gallantry, and welcome revenge! 'Tis my turn now to be upon the sublime; I'll take her off, I warrant her!

Enter BISARRE.

Well, mistress, do you love me?

Bis. I hope, sir, you will pardon the modesty of——

Dur. Of what? of a dancing devil!—Do you love me, I say?

Bis. Perhaps I——

Dur. What?

Bis. Perhaps I do not.

Dur. Ha! abused again! Death, woman, I'll——

Bis. Hold, hold, sir! I do, do!

Dur. Confirm it, then, by your obedience; stand there, and ogle me now, as if your heart, blood, and soul were like to fly out at your eyes—First, the direct surprise. [*She looks full upon him.*] Right; next, the *deux yeux par oblique.* [*She gives him the side Glance.*] Right; now depart, and languish. [*She turns from him, and looks over her shoulder.*] Very well; now sigh. [*She sighs.*] Now drop your fan on purpose. [*She drops her Fan.*] Now take it up again. Come now, confess your faults; are you not a proud—say after me.

Bis. Proud.

Dur. Impertinent.

Bis. Impertinent.

Dur. Ridiculous.

Bis. Ridiculous.

Dur. Flirt.

Bis. Puppy.

Dur. Zoons! Woman, don't provoke me; we are alone, and you don't know but the devil may tempt

me to do you a mischief. Ask my pardon immediately.

Bis. I do, sir; I only mistook the word.

Dur. Cry, then. Have you got e'er a handkerchief?

Bis. Yes, sir.

Dur. Cry, then, handsomely; cry like a queen in a tragedy. [*She pretending to cry, bursts out a laughing.*

Enter Two LADIES, *laughing.*

Bis. Ha! ha! ha!

Both Ladies. Ha! ha! ha!

Dur. Hell broke loose upon me, and all the furies fluttered about my ears! Betrayed again?

Bis. That you are, upon my word, my dear captain; ha! ha! ha!

Dur. The Lord deliver me!

1 *Lady.* What! is this the mighty man, with the bull-face, that comes to frighten ladies?

Dur. Ha, madam, I'm the best-natured fellow in the world.

Bis. A man! we're mistaken; a man has manners: the awkward creature is some tinker's trull, in a periwig. Come, ladies, let us examine him.

[*They lay hold on him.*

Dur. Examine! the devil you will!

Bis. I'll lay my life, some great dairy maid in man's clothes!

Dur. They will do't.—Lookye, dear christian women! pray hear me.

Bis. Will you ever attempt a lady's honour again?

Dur. If you please to let me get away with my honour, I'll do any thing in the world.

Bis. Will you persuade your friend to marry mine?

Dur. O yes, to be sure.

Bis. And will you do the same by me?

Dur. Burn me if I do, if the coast be clear.

[*Runs out.*

Bis. Ha! ha! ha! The visit, ladies, was critical for our diversions: we'll go make an end of our tea.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL *and* OLD MIRABEL.

Y. Mir. Your patience, sir. I tell you, I won't marry; and, though you send all the bishops in France to persuade me, I shall never believe their doctrine against their practice. You would compel me to that state, which I have heard you curse yourself, when my mother and you have battled it for a whole week together.

Old Mir. Never but once, you rogue, and that was when she longed for six Flanders mares: Ay, sir, then she was breeding of you, which shewed what an expensive dog I should have of you.

Enter PETIT.

Well, Petit, how does she now?

Petit. Mad, sir, *con pompos*—Ay, Mr Mirabel, you'll believe that I speak truth now, when I confess that I have told you hitherto nothing but lies: our jesting is come to a sad earnest; she's downright distracted!

Enter BISARRE.

Bis. Where is this mighty victor!——The great exploit is done. O, sir, [*To the old Gentleman.*] your wretched ward has found a tender guardian of you, where her young innocence expected protection, here has she found her ruin.

Old Mir. Ay, the fault is mine; for I believe that rogue won't marry, for fear of begetting such another disobedient son as his father did. I have done all I can, madam, and now can do no more than run mad for company. [*Cries.*

Enter DUGARD, *with his Sword drawn.*

Dug. Away! Revenge! Revenge!

Old Mir. Patience! Patience, sir! [OLD MIRABEL *holds him.*] Bob, draw.

Dug. Patience! the coward's virtue, and the brave man's failing, when thus provoked—Villain!

Y. Mir. Your sister's phrenzy shall excuse your madness; and, to shew my concern for what she suffers, I'll bear the villain from her brother.—Put up your anger with your sword; I have a heart like yours, that swells at an affront received, but melts at an injury given; and, if the lovely Oriana's grief be such a moving scene, 'twill find a part within this breast, perhaps as tender as a brother's.

Dug. To prove that soft compassion for her grief, endeavour to remove it.—There, there, behold an object that's infective; I cannot view her, but I am as mad as she!

Enter ORIANA, *held by Two Maids, who put her in a Chair.*

A sister, that my dying parents left, with their last words and blessing, to my care. Sister, dearest sister! [*Goes to her.*

Old Mir. Ay, poor child, poor child, d'ye know me?

Oriana. You! you are Amadis de Gaul, sir.—Oh! oh, my heart! Were you ever in love, fair lady? And do you never dream of flowers and gardens?—I dream of walking fires, and tall gigantic sights. Take heed, it comes now—What's that? Pray stand away: I have seen that face, sure.—How light my head is!

Y. Mir. What piercing charms has beauty, even in madness!

Oriana. I cannot; for I must be up to go to church, and I must dress me, put on my new gown, and be so fine, to meet my love. Heigho!—Will not you tell me where my heart lies buried?

Y. Mir. My very soul is touch'd—Your hand, my fair!

Oriana. How soft and gentle you feel! I'll tell you your fortune, friend.

Y. Mir. How she stares upon me!

Oriana. You have a flattering face; but 'tis a fine one—I warrant you have five hundred mistresses—Ay, to be sure, a mistress for every guinea in his pocket—Will you pray for me? I shall die to-morrow——And will you ring my passing-bell?

Y. Mir. Do you know me, injured creature?

Oriana. No,—but you shall be my intimate acquaintance—in the grave. [*Weeps.*

Y. Mir. Oh, tears! I must believe you; sure there's a kind of sympathy in madness; for even I, obdurate as I am, do feel my soul so tossed with storms of passion, that I could cry for help as well as she. [*Wipes his Eyes.*

Oriana. What, have you lost your lover? No, you mock me; I'll go home and pray.

Y. Mir. Stay, my fair innocence, and hear me own my love so loud, that I may call your senses to their place, restore them to their charming happy functions, and reinstate myself into your favour.

Bis. Let her alone, sir; 'tis all too late; she trembles; hold her, her fits grow stronger by her talking; don't trouble her, she don't know you, sir.

Old Mir. Not know him! what then? she loves to see him for all that.

Enter DURETETE.

Dur. Where are you all? What the devil! melancholy, and I here! Are ye sad, and such a ridiculous subject, such a very good jest among you as I am?

Y. Mir. Away with this impertinence: this is no place for bagatelle; I have murdered my honour, destroyed a lady, and my desire of reparation is come at length too late. See there!

Dur. What ails her?

Y. Mir. Alas, she's mad!

Dur. Mad! dost wonder at that? By this light, they're all so; they're cozening mad; they're brawling mad; they're proud mad: I just now came from a whole world of mad women, that had almost—What, is she dead?

Y. Mir. Dead! Heavens forbid.

Dur. Heavens further it; for, till they be as cold as a key, there's no trusting them; you're never sure that a woman's in earnest, till she is nailed in her coffin. Shall I talk to her? Are you mad, mistress?

Bis. What's that to you, sir!

Dur. Oons, madam, are you there? [*Runs off.*

Y. Mir. Away, thou wild buffoon! How poor and mean this humour now appears? His follies and my own I here disclaim; this lady's phrenzy has restored my senses, and was she perfect now, as once she was, (before you all I speak it) she should be mine; and, as she is, my tears and prayers shall wed her.

Dug. How happy had this declaration been some hours ago!

Bis. Sir, she beckons to you, and waves us to go off; come, come, let's leave them,

[*Exeunt all but* YOUNG MIRABEL *and* ORIANA.

Oriana. Oh, sir!

Y. Mir. Speak, my charming angel, if your dear senses have regained their order; speak, fair, and bless me with the news.

Oriana. First, let me bless the cunning of my sex, that happy counterfeited phrenzy that has restored to my poor labouring breast the dearest, best beloved of men.

Y. Mir. Tune all, ye spheres, your instruments of joy, and carry round your spacious orbs the happy sound of Oriana's health; her soul, whose harmony was next to yours, is now in tune again; the counterfeiting fair has played the fool.

She was so mad, to counterfeit for me;
I was so mad, to pawn my liberty:
But now we both are well, and both are free.

Oriana. How, sir? Free!

Y. Mir. As air, my dear bedlamite! What, marry lunatic! Lookye, my dear, you have counterfeited adness so very well this bout, that you'll be apt to ay the fool all your life long.——Here, gentleen!

Oriana. Monster! you won't disgrace me!

Y. Mir. O' my faith, but I will. Here, come in entlemen.—A miracle! a miracle! the woman's dis-essess'd! the devil's vanished!

Enter OLD MIRABEL *and* DUGARD.

Old Mir. Bless us! was she possessed?

Y. Mir. With the worst of demons, sir! a mar-age devil! a horrid devil!—Mr Dugard, don't be irprised. I promised my endeavours to cure your ster; no mad doctor in Christendom could have one it more effectually. Take her into your charge; nd have a care she don't relapse. If she should, mploy me not again, for I am no more infallible ian others of the faculty; I do cure sometimes.

Oriana. Your remedy, most barbarous man, will rove the greatest poison to my health; for, though ıy former phrenzy was but counterfeit, I now shall ın into a real madness.

[*Exit*; OLD MIRABEL *after.*

Y. Mir. What a dangerous precipice have I 'scap'd! Vas not I just now upon the brink of destruction?

Enter DURETETE.

)h, my friend, let me run into thy bosom! no lark

escaped from the devouring pounces of a hawk, quakes with more dismal apprehension.

Dur. The matter, man!

Y. Mir. Marriage! hanging! I was just at the gallows foot, the running noose about my neck, and the cart wheeling from me.—Oh, I shan't be myself this month again!

Dur. Did not I tell you so? They are all alike, saints or devils!

Y. Mir. Ay, ay: there's no living here with security; this house is so full of stratagem and design, that I must abroad again.

Dur. With all my heart; I'll bear thee company, my lad: I'll meet you at the play; and we'll set out for Italy to-morrow morning.

Y. Mir. A match; I'll go pay my compliment of leave to my father presently.

Dur. I'm afraid he'll stop you.

Y. Mir. What, pretend a command over me, after his settlement of a thousand pound a-year upon me! No, no, he has passed away his authority with the conveyance; the will of the living father is chiefly obeyed for the sake of the dying one.

Dependence ev'n a father's sway secures,
For, though the son rebels, the heir is yours.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The Street before the Playhouse.

ABEL *and* DURETETE, *as coming from the Play.*

r. How d'ye like this play?

Mir. I liked the company;—the lady, the rich y, in the front box, had my attention: These lent poets bring the ladies together to support and to kill every body else.

r deaths upon the stage, the ladies cry,
t ne'er mind us, that in the audience die:
e poet's hero should not move their pain,
t they should weep for those their eyes have slain.

r. Hoyty, toyty! did Phillis inspire you with is?

Mir. Ten times more; the playhouse is the ele- of poetry, because the region of beauty; the s, methinks, have a more inspiring, triumphant the boxes than any where else—they sit, com- ling on their thrones, with all their subject slaves t them:—Their best clothes, best looks, shining ls, sparkling eyes; the treasure of the world in a —I could wish that my whole life long were the night of a new play.

ur. The fellow has quite forgot this journey:— e you bespoke post horses?

Mir. Grant me but three days, dear captain, to discover the lady, one to unfold myself, and to make me happy, and then I'm yours to the d's end.

Dur. Hast thou the impudence to promise thyself a lady of her figure and quality in so short a time?

Y. Mir. Yes, sir; I have a confident address, no disagreeable person, and five hundred louis d'ors in my pocket.

Dur. Five hundred louis d'ors! you an't mad!

Y. Mir. I tell you, she's worth five thousand; one of her black, brilliant eyes is worth a diamond as big as her head.

Dur. But you have owned to me, that, abating Oriana's pretensions to marriage, you loved her passionately; then how can you wander at this rate?

Y. Mir. I longed for a partridge t'other day, off the king's plate; but d'ye think, because I could not have it, I must eat nothing?

Enter ORIANA, *in Boy's Clothes, with a Letter.*

Oriana. Is your name Mirabel, sir?

Y. Mir. Yes, sir.

Oriana. A letter from your uncle, in Picardy.

[*Gives the Letter.*

Y. Mir. [*Reads.*]

The bearer is the son of a protestant gentleman, who, flying for his religion, left me the charge of this youth.—A pretty boy!—*He's fond of some handsome service, that may afford him opportunity of improvement: your care of him will oblige,*

Yours.

Hast a mind to travel, child?

Oriana. 'Tis my desire, sir; I should be pleased to serve a traveller in any capacity.

Y. Mir. A hopeful inclination; you shall along with me into Italy, as my page.

Dur. [*Noise without.*] Too handsome—The play's done, and some of the ladies come this way.

[LAMORCE *without, with her Train borne up by a* PAGE.

Y. Mir. Duretete, the very dear, identical she!

Dur. And what then?

Y. Mir. Why, 'tis she!

Dur. And what then, sir?

Y. Mir. Then!—Why, lookye, sirrah, the first piece of service I put upon you, is to follow that lady's coach, and bring me word where she lives.

[*To* ORIANA.

Oriana. I don't know the town, sir, and am afraid of losing myself.

Y. Mir. Pshaw!

Enter LAMORCE *and* PAGE.

Lam. Page, what's become of all my people?

Page. I can't tell, madam; I can see no sign of your ladyship's coach.

Lam. That fellow has got into his old pranks, and fallen drunk somewhere;—none of the footmen there?

Page. Not one, madam.

Lam. These servants are the plague of our lives—what shall I do?

Y. Mir. By all my hopes, Fortune pimps for me! Now, Duretete, for a piece of gallantry!

Dur. Why, you won't, sure?

Y. Mir. Won't, brute!—Let not your servants' neglect, madam, put your ladyship to any inconvenience; for you can't be disappointed of an equipage, whilst mine waits below: and, would you honour the master so far, he would be proud to pay his attendance.

Dur. Ay, to be sure! [*Aside.*

Lam. Sir, I won't presume to be troublesome, for my habitation is a great way off.

Dur. Very true, madam, and he's a little engaged; besides, madam—a hackney coach will do as well, madam.

Y. Mir. Rude beast, be quiet! [*To* DURETETE.] The farther from home, madam, the more occasion you have for a guard—Pray, madam—

Lam. Lard, sir——

[*He seems to press, she to decline it, in dumb show.*

Dur. Ah! The devil's in his impudence! Now he wheedles, she smiles—he flatters, she simpers—he swears, she believes—he's a rogue, and she's a w—— in a moment.

Y. Mir. Without there! my coach!—Duretete, wish me joy! [*Hands the Lady out.*

Dur. Wish you a ——! Here, you little Picard, go follow your master, and he'll lead you——

Oriana. Whither, sir?

Dur. To the Academy, child—'tis the fashion with men of quality to teach their pages their exercises—go.

Oriana. Won't you go with him too, sir? That woman may do him some harm, I don't like her.

Dur. Why, how now, Mr Page, do you start up to give laws of a sudden? Do you pretend to rise at court, and disapprove the pleasure of your betters?—Lookye, sirrah, if ever you would rise by a great man, be sure to be with him in his little actions; and, as a step to your advancement, follow your master immediately, and make it your hope that he goes to a bagnio.

Oriana. Heavens forbid! [*Exit.*

Dur. Now would I sooner take a cart in company of the hangman, than a coach with that woman:—What a strange antipathy have I taken against these creatures! A woman to me, is aversion upon aversion! a cheese, a cat, a breast of mutton, the squalling of children, the grinding of knives, and the snuff of a candle. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

LAMORCE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter MIRABEL *and* LAMORCE.

Lam. To convince me, sir, that your service was something more than good breeding, please to lay out

an hour of your company upon my desire, as you have already upon my necessity.

Y. Mir. Your desire, madam, has only prevented my request:—My hours! Make them yours, madam, eleven, twelve, one, two, three, and all that belong to those happy minutes.

Lam. But I must trouble you, sir, to dismiss your retinue, because an equipage at my door, at this time of night, will not be consistent with my reputation.

Y. Mir. By all means, madam, all but one little boy—Here, page!

Enter ORIANA.

Order my coach and servants home, and do you stay; 'tis a foolish country boy, that knows nothing but innocence.

Lam. Innocence, sir! I should be sorry if you made any sinister constructions of my freedom.

Y. Mir. O, madam, I must not pretend to remark upon any body's freedom, having so entirely forfeited my own.

Lam. Well, sir, 'twere convenient towards our easy correspondence, that we entered into a free confidence of each other, by a mutual declaration of what we are, and what we think of one another.—Now, sir, what are you?

Y. Mir. In three words, madam,—I am a gentleman, and have five hundred pounds in my pocket.

Lam. And your name is——

Y. Mir. Mustapha.—Now, madam, the inventory of your fortunes?

Lam. My name is Lamorce—my birth noble; I was married young to a proud, rude, sullen, impetuous fellow;—the husband spoiled the gentleman;—crying ruined my face, till at last I took heart, leaped out of a window, got away to my friends, sued my tyrant, and recovered my fortune.—I lived from fifteen to twenty, to please a husband; from twenty

to forty, I'm resolved to please myself, and from thence, upwards, I'll humour the world.

Y. Mir. Ha! ha! ha! I rejoice in your good fortune, with all my heart!

Lam. O, now I think on't, Mr Mustapha, you have got the finest ring there, I could scarcely believe it right; pray let me see it.

Y. Mir. Hum! Yes, madam, 'tis—'tis right—but—but—but—but—but it was given me by my mother—an old family ring, madam—an old-fashioned, family ring.

Lam. Ay, sir!—If you can entertain yourself for a moment, I'll wait on you immediately. [*Exit.*

Y. Mir. Certainly the stars have been in a strange intriguing humour, when I was born.—Ay, this night should I have had a bride in my arms, and that I should like well enough! But what should I have tomorrow night? The same. And what next night? The same. And what next night? The very same: Soup for breakfast, soup for dinner, soup for supper, and soup for breakfast again—But here's variety.

I love the fair, who freely gives her heart,
That's mine by ties of nature, not of art;
Who boldly owns whate'er her thoughts indite,
And is too modest for a hypocrite.

[LAMORCE *appears at the Door; as he runs towards her, Four* BRAVOES *step in before her. He starts back.*

She comes, she comes—Hum, hum—Bitch—Murdered, murdered, to be sure! The cursed strumpet! To make me send away my servants—Nobody near me! These cut-throats always make sure work.—What shall I do? I have but one way. Are these gentlemen your relations, madam?

Lam. Yes, sir.

Y. Mir. Gentlemen, your most humble servant;—

sir, your most faithful; yours, sir, with all my heart; your most obedient—Come, gentlemen, [*Salutes all round.*] please to sit—no ceremony—next the lady, pray, sir.

Lam. Well, sir, and how d'ye like my friends?

[*They all sit.*

Y. Mir. O, madam, the most finished gentlemen; I was never more happy in good company in my life. I suppose, sir, you have travelled?

1 *Bra.* Yes, sir.

Y. Mir. Which way, may I presume?

1 *Bra.* In a western barge, sir.

Y. Mir. Ha! ha! ha! very pretty! facetious pretty gentleman!

Lam. Ha! ha! ha! sir, you have got the prettiest ring upon your finger there—

Y. Mir. Ah! Madam, 'tis at your service, with all my heart! [*Offering the Ring.*

Lam. By no means, sir, a family ring! [*Takes it.*

Y. Mir. No matter, madam.——Seven hundred pound, by this light! [*Aside.*

2 *Bra.* Pray, sir, what's o'clock?

Y. Mir. Hum! Sir, I have left my watch at home.

2 *Bra.* I thought I saw the string of it just now.

Y. Mir. Ods my life, sir, I beg your pardon, here it is!—but it don't go. [*Putting it up.*

Lam. O, dear sir, an English watch! Tompion's, I presume?

Y. Mir. D'ye like it, madam? No ceremony—'tis at your service, with all my heart and soul!—Tompion's! Hang ye! [*Aside.*

1 *Bra.* But, sir, above all things, I admire the fashion and make of your sword hilt!

Y. Mir. I'm mighty glad you like it, sir!

1 *Bra.* Will you part with it, sir?

Y. Mir. Sir, I wont sell it.

1 *Bra.* Not sell it, sir!

Y. Mir. No, gentlemen, but I'll bestow it, with all my heart! [*Offering it.*

1 *Bra.* O sir, we shall rob you!

Y. Mir. That you do I'll be-sworn! [*Aside.*]—I have another at home; pray, sir,—Gentlemen, you're too modest—have I any thing else that you fancy?—Sir, will you do me a favour? [*To the First* BRAVO.] I am extremely in love with that hat which you wear; will you do me the favour to change with me?

1 *Bra.* Lookye, sir, this is a family hat, and I would not part with it, but if you like it——[*They change Hats.*]—I want but a handsome pretence to quarrel with him—Some wine! Sir, your good health. [*Pulls* MIRABEL *by the Nose.*

Y. Mir. Oh, sir, your most humble servant! a pleasant frolic enough, to drink a man's health, and pull him by the nose! ha! ha! ha! the pleasantest, pretty-humoured gentleman——

Lam. Help the gentleman to a glass.

[MIRABEL *drinks.*

1 *Bra.* How d'ye like the wine, sir?

Y. Mir. Very good o'the kind, sir:—But I tell ye what, I find we are all inclined to be frolicsome, and 'egad, for my own part, I was never more disposed to be merry; let's make a night on't, ha!—This wine is pretty, but I have such burgundy at home! Lookye, gentlemen, let me send for half a dozen flasks of my burgundy, I defy France to match it;—'twill make us all life, all air; pray, gentlemen.

2 *Bra.* Eh? Shall us have his burgundy?

1 *Bra.* Yes, 'faith, we'll have all we can; here, call up the gentleman's servant.—[*Exit* FOOTMAN.] What think you, Lamorce?

Lam. Yes, yes—Your servant is a foolish country boy, sir, he understands nothing but innocence.

Y. Mir. Ay, ay, madam.—Here, page,——

Enter ORIANA.

Take this key, and go to my butler, order him to send half a dozen flasks of the red burgundy, marked a thousand; and be sure you make haste, I long to entertain my friends here; my very good friends.

Omnes. Ah! dear sir.

1 *Bra.* Here, child, take a glass of wine—Your master and I have changed hats, honey, in a frolic.—Where had you this pretty boy, honest Mustapha?

Oriana. Mustapha!

Y. Mir. Out of Picardy—this is the first errand he has made for me, and if he does it right, I will encourage him.

Oriana. The red burgundy, sir!

Y. Mir. The red, marked a thousand, and be sure you make haste.

Oriana. I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

1 *Bra.* Sir, you were pleased to like my hat, have you any fancy for my coat?—Lookye, sir, it has served a great many honest gentlemen very faithfully.

Y. Mir. The insolence of these dogs is beyond their cruelty! [*Aside.*

Lam. You're melancholy, sir.

Y. Mir. Only concerned, madam, that I should have no servant here but this little boy—he'll make some confounded blunder, I'll lay my life on't; I would not be disappointed of my wine for the universe.

Lam. He'll do well enough, sir; but supper's ready; will you please to eat a bit, sir?

Y. Mir. O, madam, I never had a better stomach in my life.

Lam. Come, then, we have nothing but a plate of soup.

Y. Mir. Ah! the marriage soup I could dispense with now. [*Aside.—Exit, handing the Lady.*

2 *Bra.* Shall we dispatch him?

3 *Bra.* To be sure; I think he knows me.

1 *Bra.* Ay, ay, dead men tell no tales; I han't the confidence to look a man in the face, after I have done him an injury, therefore we'll murder him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

OLD MIRABEL'S *House.*

Enter DURETETE.

Dur. My friend has forsaken me, I have abandoned my mistress, my time lies heavy upon my hands, and my money burns in my pocket—But now I think on't, my myrmidons are upon duty to-night; I'll fairly stroll down to the guard, and nod away the night with my honest lieutenant, over a flask of wine, a story, and a pipe of tobacco.

[*Going off,* BISARRE *meets him.*

Bis. Who comes there? stand!

Dur. Heyday, now she's turned dragoon!

Bis. Lookye, sir, I'm told you intend to travel again.—I design to wait upon you as far as Italy.

Dur. Then I'll travel into Wales.

Bis. Wales! What country's that?

Dur. The land of mountains, child; where you're never out of the way, 'cause there's no such thing as a highroad.

Bis. Rather, always in a highroad, because you travel all upon hills; but be't as it will, I'll jog along with you.

Dur. But we intend to sail to the East Indies.

Bis. East, or West, 'tis all one to me: I'm tight and light, and the fitter for sailing.

Dur. But suppose we take through Germany, and drink hard?

Bis. Suppose I take through Germany, and drink harder than you?

Dur. Suppose I go to a bawdy house?

Bis. Suppose I shew you the way?

Dur. 'Sdeath, woman! will you go to the guard with me, and smoke a pipe?

Bis. Allons donc!

Dur. The devil's in the woman!—Suppose I hang myself?

Bis. There I'll leave you.

Dur. And a happy riddance: the gallows is welcome.

Bis. Hold, hold, sir, [*Catches him by the Arm, going.*] one word before we part.

Dur. Let me go, madam,—or I shall think that you're a man, and, perhaps, may examine you.

Bis. Stir if you dare; I have still spirits to attend me, and can raise such a muster of fairies, as shall punish you to death.—Come, sir, stand there now, and ogle me: [*He frowns upon her.*] Now a languishing sigh: [*He groans.*] Now run, and take my fan,—faster. [*He runs, and takes it up.*] Now play with it handsomely.

Dur. Ay, ay. [*He tears it all in pieces.*

Bis. Hold, hold, dear, humorous coxcomb! Captain, spare my fan, and I'll—Why, you rude, inhuman monster! don't you expect to pay for this?

Dur. Yes, madam, there's twelve pence; for that is the price on't.

Bis. Sir, it cost a guinea.

Dur. Well, madam, you shall have the sticks again. [*Throws them to her, and exit.*

Bis. Ha! ha! ha! ridiculous, below my concern! I must follow him, however, to know if he can give me any news of Oriana. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

LAMORCE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL.

Y. Mir. Bloody hell-hounds! I overheard you:—Was not I, two hours ago, the happy, gay, rejoicing Mirabel? How did I plume my hopes in a fair, coming prospect, of a long scene of years! Life courted me with all the charms of vigour, youth, and fortune; and to be torn away from all my promised joys, is more than death;—the manner too, by villains!—O, my Oriana, this very moment might have blessed me in thy arms!—and my poor boy! the innocent boy! Confusion!—But hush, they come—I must dissemble still.—No news of my wine, gentlemen?

Enter the Four BRAVOES.

1 *Bra.* No, sir; I believe your country booby has lost himself, and we can wait no longer for't:—True, sir, you're a pleasant gentleman, but, I suppose you understand our business?

Y. Mir. Sir, I may go near to guess at your employments; you, sir, are a lawyer, I presume—you a physician—you a scrivener, and you a stock jobber.—All cut-throats, egad! [*Aside.*

4 *Bra.* Sir, I am a broken officer; I was cashiered at the head of the army for a coward, so I took up the trade of murder, to retrieve the reputation of my courage.

3 *Bra.* I am a soldier too, and would serve my king; but I don't like the quarrel, and I have more honour than to fight in a bad cause.

2 *Bra.* I was bred a gentleman, and have no estate; but I must have my whore and my bottle, through the prejudice of education.

1 *Bra.* I am a ruffian too; by the prejudice of edu-

cation, I was bred a butcher.—In short, sir, if your wine had come, we might have trifled a little longer. —Come, sir, which sword will you fall by? mine, sir?

2 Bra. Or mine? [*Draws.*

3 Bra. Or mine? [*Draws.*

4 Bra. Or mine? [*Draws.*

Y. Mir. I scorn to beg my life; but to be butchered thus!—O, there's the wine!—this moment for [*Knocking.*] my life or death.

Enter ORIANA.

Lost! for ever lost!—Where's the wine, child? [*Faintly.*

Oriana. Coming up, sir. [*Stamps.*

Enter DURETETE *with his Sword drawn, and six of the* GRAND MUSQUETEERS, *with their Pieces presented; the* RUFFIANS *drop their Swords.*—ORIANA *goes off.*

Y. Mir. The wine, the wine, the wine! Youth, pleasure, fortune, days and years, are now my own again! Ah, my dear friends! did not I tell you, this wine would make me merry?—Dear captain, these gentlemen are the best natured, facetious, witty creatures, that ever you knew.

Enter LAMORCE.

Lam. Is the wine come, sir?

Y. Mir. O yes, madam, the wine is come——see there! [*Pointing to the* SOLDIERS.] Your ladyship has got a very fine ring upon your finger.

Lam. Sir, 'tis at your service.

Y. Mir. O ho! is it so? Thou dear seven hundred pound, thou'rt welcome home again, with all my heart!—Ad's my life, madam, you have got the finest built watch there! Tompion's, I presume?

Lam. Sir, you may wear it.

Y. Mir. O madam, by no means, 'tis too much—Rob you of all!—[*Taking it from her.*] Good, dear time, thou'rt a precious thing, I'm glad I have retrie-

ved thee. [*Putting it up.*] What, my friends neglected all this while! Gentlemen, you'll pardon my complaisance to the lady.—How now! is it civil to be so out of humour at my entertainment, and I so pleased with yours?—Captain, you're surprised at all this—but we're in our frolics, you must know.—Some wine here!

Enter SERVANT, *with Wine.*

Come, captain, this worthy gentleman's health.

[*Tweaks the First* BRAVOE *by the Nose; he roars.*

But now, where—where's my dear deliverer, my boy, my charming boy?

1 *Bra.* I hope some of our crew below stairs have dispatched him.

Y. Mir. Villain, what say'st thou? dispatched! I'll have ye all tortured, racked, torn to pieces alive, if you have touched my boy.—Here, page! page! page!

[*Runs out.*

Dur. Here, gentlemen, be sure you secure those fellows.

1 *Bra.* Yes, sir, we know you, and your guard will be very civil to us.

Dur. Take them to justice. [*The* GUARDS *carry off the* BRAVOES.] Now for you, madam;——He! he! he! I'm so pleased to think that I shall be revenged of one woman, before I die.—Well, Mrs Snap Dragon, which of these honourable gentlemen is so happy to call you wife?

1 *Bra.* Sir, she should have been mine to-night, 'cause Sampre, here, had her last night.—Sir, she's very true to us all four.

Enter OLD MIRABEL, DUGARD, *and* BISARRE.

Old Mir. Robin! Robin!—Where's Bob? where's my boy?—What, is this the lady? a pretty creature, 'faith!—Harkye, child, because my son was so civil as to oblige you with a coach, I'll treat you with a cart, indeed I will.

Dug. Ay, madam, and you shall have a swinging equipage; three or four thousand footmen at your heels, at least.

Dur. No less becomes her quality.

Bis. Faugh! the monster!

Dur. Monster! ay, you're all a little monstrous, let me tell you.

Enter YOUNG MIRABEL.

Old Mir. Ah, my dear Bob! art thou safe, man!

Y. Mir. No, no, sir, I am ruined: the saver of my life is lost!

Old Mir. No, he came and brought us the news.

Y. Mir. But where is he?

Enter ORIANA.

Ha! [*Runs and embraces her.*] My dear preserver! what shall I do to recompense your trust?—Father, friends, gentlemen, behold the youth that has relieved me from the most ignominious death!—Command me, child; before you all—before my late so kind, indulgent stars, I swear to grant whate'er you ask.

Oriana. To the same stars, indulgent now to me, I will appeal, as to the justice of my claim: I shall demand but what was mine before—the just performance of your contract to Oriana. [*Discovering herself.*

Omnes. Oriana!

Oriana. In this disguise I resolved to follow you abroad, counterfeited that letter, that brought me into your service; and so, by this strange turn of fate, I became the instrument of your preservation: few common servants would have had such cunning; my love inspired me with the meaning of your message, because my concern for your safety made me suspect your company.

Dur. Mirabel, you're caught.

Y. Mir. Caught! I scorn the thought of imposition—Caught! No, 'tis my voluntary act; this was

no human stratagem, but by my providential stars, designed to shew the dangers wandering youth incurs, by the pursuit of an unlawful love; to plunge me headlong in the snares of vice, and then to free me by the hands of virtue: Here, on my knees, I humbly beg my fair preserver's pardon; my thanks are needless, for myself I owe: And now, for ever, do protest me yours.

Old Mir. Tall, all di dall! [*Sings.*] Kiss me, daughter—no, you shall kiss me first, [*To* LAMORCE.] for you're the cause on't.—Well, Bisarre, what say you to the captain?

Bis. I like the beast well enough, but I don't understand his paces so well as to venture him in a strange road.

Old Mir. But marriage is so beaten a path, that you can't go wrong.

Bis. Ay, 'tis so beaten that the way is spoiled.

Dur. There is but one thing should make me thy husband—I could marry thee to-day, for the privilege of beating thee to-morrow.

Old Mir. Come, come, you may agree for all this; —Mr Dugard, are not you pleased with this?

Dug. So pleased, that, if I thought it might secure your son's affection to my sister, I would double her fortune.

Y. Mir. Fortune! Has she not given me mine? my life—estate—my all? and what is more, her virtuous self?—Behold the foil [*Pointing to* LAMORCE.] that sets this brightness off! [*To* ORIANA.] Here view the pride, [*To* ORIANA.] and scandal of the sex!

What liberty can be so tempting there,
[*To* LAMORCE.
As a soft, virtuous, am'rous bondage here?
[*To* ORIANA.

THE END.

CAR.— FOOL DOST THOU TRIFLE WITH ME?
WHO IS WITH HER ACT I. SC. I.

Drawn by H. Corbould *Pub. by T. Norman & Sons* *Engraved by*

A

LD STROKE FOR A HUSBAND;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY MRS. COWLEY.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

ATRE ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

NTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

ED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

Printed by A. and R. Spottiswoode,
Printers-Street, London.

REMARKS.

ALTHOUGH "The Bold Stroke for a Husband," by Mrs. Cowley, does not equal "The Bold Stroke for a Wife," by Mrs. Centlivre, either in originality of design, wit, or humour, it has other advantages more honourable to her sex, and more conducive to the reputation of the stage.

Here is contained no oblique insinuation, detrimental to the cause of morality—but entertainment and instruction unite, to make a pleasant exhibition at a theatre, or give an hour's amusement in the closet.

Plays, where the scene is placed in a foreign country, particularly when that country is Spain, have a license to present certain improbabilities to the audience, without incurring the danger of having them called such; and the authoress, by the skill with which she has used this dramatic permittance, in making the wife of Don Carlos pass for a man, has formed a most interesting plot, and embellished it with lively, humorous, and affecting incident.

Still there is another plot, of which Olivia is the heroine, as Victoria is of the foregoing; and this

more comic fable, in which the former is chiefly concerned, seems to have been the favourite story of the authoress, as from this she has taken her title.

But if Olivia makes a bold stroke to obtain a husband, surely Victoria makes a still bolder to preserve one; and there is something less honourable in the enterprises of a young maiden, in order to renounce her state, than in those of a married woman to avert the dangers that are impending over hers.

Whichever of those females becomes the most admired object with the reader, he will not be insensible to the trials of the other, or to the various interests of the whole Dramatis Personæ, to whom the writer has artfully given a kind of united influence; and upon a happy combination it is, that, sometimes, the success of a drama more depends than upon the most powerful support of any particular prominent, yet insulated, character.

The part of Don Vincentio was certainly meant as a moral satire upon the extravagant love, or the foolish affectation of pretending to love, to extravagance —music. This satire was aimed at so many, that the shaft struck none. The charm of music still prevails in England, and the folly of affected admirers.

Vincentio talks music, and Don Julio speaks poetry. Such, at least, is his fond description of his mistress Olivia, in that excellent scene in the third act, where she first takes off her veil, and fascinates *him* at once by the force of her beauty.

In the delineation of this lady, it is implied that she is no termagant, although she so frequently counterfeits the character. This insinuation, the reader, if he pleases, may trust—but the man who would venture to marry a good impostor of this kind, could not excite much pity, if his helpmate was often induced to act the part which she had heretofore, with so much spirit, assumed.

The impropriety of making fraud and imposition necessary evils, to counteract tyranny and injustice, is the fault of all Spanish dramas—and perhaps the only one which attaches to the present comedy.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Don Cæsar	*Mr. Munden.*
Don Julio	*Mr. Lewis.*
Don Carlos	*Mr. Cooke.*
Don Vincentio	*Mr. Fawcett.*
Don Garcia	*Mr. Brunton.*
Don Vasquez	*Mr. Simmons.*
Gasper	*Mr. Blanchard.*
Pedro	*Mr. Harley.*
Donna Olivia	*Mrs. Glover.*
Donna Victoria	*Mrs. Litchfield.*
Donna Laura	*Mrs. Dibdin.*
Minette	*Mrs. Gibbs.*
Marcella	*Miss Waddy.*
Sancha	*Mrs. Whitmore*
Inis	*Mrs. Beverly.*

SCENE,—Spain.

BOLD STROKE FOR A HUSBAND.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Street in Madrid.

Enter SANCHA *from a House; she advances, then runs back, and beckons to* PEDRO *within.*

San. Hist! Pedro! Pedro!

Enter PEDRO.

There he is: dost see him? just turning by St. Anthony, in the corner. Now, do you tell him that your mistress is not at home; and if his jealous donship should insist on searching the house, as he did yesterday, say that somebody is ill—the black has got a fever, or that——

Ped. Pho, pho, get you in. Don't I know that the duty of a lacquey in Madrid is to lie with a good grace? I have been studying it now for a whole week, and I'll defy don or devil to surprise me into a truth. Get you in, I say—here he comes. [*Exit* SANCHA.

Enter CARLOS.

[PEDRO *struts up to him.*] Donna Laura is not at home, sir.

Car. Not at home!—Come, sir, what have you received for telling that lie?

Ped. Lie!—Lie!—Signior!—

Car. It must be a lie, by your promptness in delivering it.—What a fool does your mistress trust!—A clever rascal would have waited my approach, and, delivering the message with easy coolness, deceived me—*thou* hast been on the watch, and runnest towards me with a face of stupid importance, bawling that she may hear through the lattice how well thou obeyest her,—"Donna Laura is not at home, sir."

Ped. Hear through the lattice—hah! by'r lady, she must have long ears, to reach from the grotto in the garden to the street.

Car. Hah! [*Seizes him.*] Now, sir, your ears shall be longer, if you do not tell me who is with her in the grotto.

Ped. In the grotto, sir!—Did I say any thing about the grotto? I——I only meant that——

Car. Fool!—Dost thou trifle with me? Who is with her? [*Pinching his ear.*

Ped. Oh!—why, nobody, sir—only the pretty young gentleman's valet, waiting for an answer to a letter he brought. There! I have saved my ears at the expense of my place. I have worn this fine coat but a week, and I shall be sent back to Segovia for not being able to lie, though I have been learning the art six days and nights.

Car. Well—come this way—if thou wilt promise to be faithful to me, I will not betray thee, nor at present enter the house.

Ped. Oh, sir, blessings on you!

Car. How often does the pretty young gentleman visit her?

Ped. Every day, sir—If he misses, madam's stark wild.

Car. Where does he live?

Ped. Truly, I know not, sir.

Car. How! [*Menacing.*

Ped. By the honesty of my mother, I cannot tell, sir. She calls him Florio;—that's his christian name—his heathen name I never heard.

Car. You must acquaint me when they are next together.

Ped. Lord, sir, if there should be any blood spilt!

Car. Promise,—or I'll lead thee by the ears to the grotto.

Ped. I promise, I promise.

Car. There, take that, [*Gives money.*] and if thou art faithful, I'll treble it. Now go in, and be a good lad—and, d'ye hear?—you may tell lies to every body else, but remember you must always speak truth to me.

Ped. I will, sir,—I will.

[*Exit looking at the money.*

Car. 'Tis well my passion is extinguished, for I can now act with coolness; I'll wait patiently for the hour of their security, and take them in the softest moments of their love. But if ever I trust to woman more—may every——

Enter two WOMEN, *veiled, followed by* JULIO.

Julio. Fie, ladies! keep your curtains drawn so late! The sun is up—'tis time to look abroad—[*Tries to remove the veils.*] Nay, if you are determined on night and silence, I take my leave. A woman without prattle, is like Burgundy without spirit.—Bright eyes, to touch me, must belong to sweet tongues.

[*Going.*

Car. Sure 'tis Julio.—Hey!

Julio. [*Returning.*] Don Carlos? Yes, by all the sober gods of matrimony!—Why, what business, goodman gravity, canst thou have in Madrid—I understand you are married—quietly settled in your own pastures—father of a family, and the instructive companion of country vine-dressers—ha! ha!

Car. 'Tis false, by heaven!—I have forsworn the country—left my family, and run away from my wife.

Julio. Really! then matrimony has not totally destroyed thy free will.

Car. 'Tis with difficulty I have preserved it though; for women, thou knowest, are most unreasonable beings! As soon as I had exhausted my stock of love tales, which, with management, lasted beyond the honey-moon, madam grew sullen,—I found home dull, and amused myself with the pretty peasants of the neighbourhood——Worse and worse!—we had nothing now but faintings, tears, and hysterics for twenty-four honey-moons more.—So one morning I gave her in her sleep a farewell kiss, to comfort her when she should awake, and posted to Madrid; where, if it was not for the remembrance of the clog at my heel, I should bound o'er the regions of pleasure with more spirit than a young Arabian on his mountains.

Julio. Do you find this clog no hindrance in affairs of gallantry?

Car. Not much.—In that house there—but, damn her, she's perfidious!—in that house is a woman of beauty, with pretensions to character and fortune, who devoted herself to my passion.

Julio. If she's perfidious, give her to the winds.

Car. Ah, but there is a rub, Julio; I have been a fool—a woman's fool!—In a state of intoxication, she wheedled me, or rather cheated me, out of a settlement.

Julio. Pho! is that——

Car. Oh! but you know not its nature. A settlement of lands, that both honour and gratitude ought to have preserved sacred from such base alienation. In short, if I cannot recover them, I am a ruined man.

Julio. Nay, this seems a worse clog than t'other —Poor Carlos! so bewived and be——

Car. Pr'ythee, have compassion.

Enter a SERVANT, *with a letter to* JULIO; *he reads it, and then nods to the* SERVANT, *who exits*

Car. An appointment, I'll be sworn, by that air of mystery and satisfaction—come, be friendly, and communicate.

Julio. [*Putting up the letter.*] You are married, Carlos;—that's all I have to say—you are married.

Car. Pho! that's past long ago, and ought to be forgotten; but if a man does a foolish thing once, he'll hear of it all his life.

Julio. Ay, the time has been when thou might'st have been entrusted with such a dear secret,—when I might have opened the billet, and feasted thee with the sweet meandering strokes at the bottom, which form her name, when——

Car. What, 'tis from a woman then?

Julio. It is.

Car. Handsome?

Julio. Hum—not absolutely handsome, but she'll pass, with one who has not had his taste spoiled by —matrimony.

Car. Malicious dog!—Is she young?

Julio. Under twenty—fair complexion, azure eyes, red lips, teeth of pearl, polished neck, fine-turned shape, graceful——

Car. Hold, Julio, if thou lov'st me!—Is it possible she can be so bewitching a creature?

Julio. 'Tis possible—though, to deal plainly, I

never saw her; but I love my own pleasure so well, that I could fancy all that, and ten times more.

Car. What star does she inhabit?

Julio. 'Faith, I know not; my orders are to be in waiting, at seven, at the Prado.

Car. Prado!—hey!—gad! can't you take me with you? for though I have forsworn the sex myself, and have done with them for ever, yet I may be of use to you, you know.

Julio. 'Faith, I can't see that—however, as you are a poor wo-begone married mortal, I'll have compassion, and suffer thee to come.

Car. Then I am a man again! Wife, avaunt! mistress, farewell!—At seven, you say?

Julio. Exactly.

Car. I'll meet thee at Philippi! [*Exeunt, severally.*

SCENE II.

A spacious Garden belonging to DON CÆSAR.

Enter MINETTE *and* INIS.

Min. There, will that do? My lady sent me to make her up a nosegay; these orange flowers are delicious, and this rose, how sweet!

Inis. Pho! what signifies wearing sweets in her bosom, unless they would sweeten her manners?—'Tis amazing you can be so much at your ease; one might think your lady's tongue was a lute, and her morning scolds an agreeable serenade.

Min. So they are—Custom, you know. I have been used to her music now these two years, and I don't believe I could relish my breakfast without it.

Inis. I would rather never break my fast, than do

it on such terms. What a difference between your mistress and mine! Donna Victoria is as much too gentle, as her cousin is too harsh.

Min. Ay, and you see what she gets by it; had she been more spirited, perhaps her husband would not have forsaken her;—men enlisted under the matrimonial banner, like those under the king's, would be often tempted to run away from their colours, if fear did not keep them in dread of desertion.

Inis. If making a husband afraid is the way to keep him faithful, I believe your lady will be the happiest wife in Spain.

Min. Ha! ha! ha! how people may be deceived! —nay, how people are deceived!—But time will discover all things.

Inis. What! what, is there a secret in the business, Minette? If there is, hang time! let's have it directly.

Min. Now, if I dared but tell ye—lud! lud! how I could surprise ye!— [*Going.*

Inis. [*Stopping her.*] Don't go.

Min. I must go; I am on the very brink of betraying my mistress—I must leave you—mercy upon me! it rises like new bread.

Inis. I hope it will choke ye, if ye stir till I know all.

Min. Will you never breathe a syllable?

Inis. Never.

Min. Will you strive to forget it the moment you have heard it?

Inis. I'll swear to myself forty times a-day to forget it.

Min. You are sure you will not let me stir from this spot till you know the whole?

Inis. Not as far as a thrush hops.

Min. So! now, then, in one word,—here it goes. Though every body supposes my lady an arrant scold, she's no more a—— [*Looking out.*

Don Cæsar. [*Without.*] Out upon't! e—h—h!

Min. Oh, St. Jerome!—here is her father and his privy counsellor, Gasper. I can never communicate a secret in quiet. Well! come to my chamber, for, now my hand's in, you shall have the whole.—I would not keep it another day, to be confidante to an infanta. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Don Cæsar *and* Gasper.

Gasp. Take comfort, sir; take comfort.

Cæsar. Take it!—why, where the devil shall I find it? You may say, take physic, sir, or take poison, sir——they are to be had; but what signifies bidding me take comfort, when I can neither buy it, beg it, nor steal it?

Gasp. But patience will bring it, sir.

Cæsar. 'Tis false, sirrah.—Patience is a cheat, and the man that ranked her with the cardinal virtues was a fool.—I have had patience at bed and board these three long years, but the comfort she promised has never called in with a civil how d'ye.

Gasp. Ay, sir, but you know the poets say that the twin sister and companion of comfort is good-humour.—Now, if you would but drop that agreeable acidity, which is so conspicuous—

Cæsar. Then let my daughter drop her perverse humour; 'tis a more certain bar to marriage than ugliness or folly; and will send me to my grave at last, without male heirs. [*Crying.*] How many have laid siege to her! But that humour of hers, like the works of Gibraltar, no Spaniard can find pregnable.

Gasp. Ay, well—Troy held out but ten years——Let her once tell over her beads, unmarried, at five-and-twenty, and, my life upon it, she ends the rosary, with a hearty prayer for a good husband.

Cæsar. What, d'ye expect me to wait till the horrors of old maidenism frighten her into civility? No, no;—I'll shut her up in a convent, marry myself,

and have heirs in spite of her. There's my neighbour Don Vasquez's daughter, she is but nineteen——

Gasp. The very step I was going to recommend, sir. You are but a young gentleman of sixty-three, I take it; and a husband of sixty-three, who marries a wife of nineteen, will never want heirs, take my word for it.

Cæsar. What! do you joke, sirrah?

Gasp. Oh, no, sir—not if you are serious. I think it would be one of the pleasantest things in the world—Madam would throw a new life into the family; and when you are above stairs in the gout, sir, the music of her concerts, and the spirit of her conversationes, would reach your sick bed, and be a thousand times more comforting than flannels and panada.

Cæsar. Come, come, I understand ye.—But this daughter of mine—I shall give her but two chances more.——Don Garcia and Don Vincentio will both be here to-day, and if she plays over the old game, I'll marry to-morrow morning, if I hang myself the next.

Gasp. You decide right, signior; at sixty-three the marriage noose and the hempen noose should always go together.

Cæsar. Why, you dog you, do you suppose—There's Don Garcia—there he is, coming through the portico. Run to my daughter, and bid her remember what I have said to her. [*Exit* GASPER.] She has had her lesson—but another memento mayn't be amiss—a young slut!—pretty, and witty, and rich—a match for a prince, and yet—but hist!——Not a word to my young man; if I can but keep him in ignorance till he is married, he must make the best of his bargain afterwards, as other honest men have done before him.

Enter GARCIA.

Welcome, Don Garcia !—why, you are rather before your time.

Gar. Gallantry forbid that I should not, when a fair lady is concerned. Should Donna Olivia welcome me as frankly as you do, I shall think I have been tardy.

Cæsar. When you made your overtures, signior, I understood it was from inclination to be allied to my family, not from a particular passion to my daughter. Have you ever seen her ?

Gar. But once—that transiently—yet sufficient to convince me that she is charming.

Cæsar. Why, yes, though I say it, there are few prettier women in Madrid; and she has got enemies amongst her own sex accordingly. They pretend to say that——I say, sir, they have reported that she is not blessed with that kind of docility and gentleness that a——now, though she may not be so very placid, and insipid, as some young women, yet, upon the whole—

Gar. Oh, fie, sir !—not a word—A beauty cannot be ill-tempered; gratified vanity keeps her in good humour with herself, and every body about her.

Cæsar. Yes, as you say—vanity is a prodigious sweetener; and Olivia, considering how much she has been humoured, is as gentle and pliant as—

Enter MINETTE.

Min. Oh, sir ! shield me from my mistress—She is in one of her old tempers—the whole house is in an uproar.—I cannot support it !

Cæsar. Hush !

Min. No, sir, I can't hush—A saint could not bear it. I am tired of her tyranny, and must quit her service.

Cæsar. Then quit it in a moment—go to my steward, and receive your wages—go—begone! 'Tis a cousin of my daughter's she is speaking of.

Min. A cousin, sir!—No, 'tis Donna Olivia, your daughter—my mistress. Oh, sir! you seem to be a sweet tender-hearted, young gentleman—'twould move you to pity if—— [*To* GARCIA.

Cæsar. I'll move you, hussy, to some purpose, if you don't move off.

Gar. I am really confounded—can the charming Olivia—

Cæsar. Spite, sir—mere malice! My daughter has refused her some cast gown, or some—

Olivia. [*Without.*] Where is she?—Where is Minette?

Cæsar. Oh, 'tis all over!—the tempest is coming.

Enter OLIVIA.

Oliv. Oh, you vile creature!—to speak to me!—to answer me!—am I made to be answered?

Cæsar. Daughter! daughter!

Oliv. Because I threw my work-bag at her, she had the insolence to complain; and, on my repeating it, said she would not bear it.—Servants choose what they shall bear!

Min. When you are married, ma'am, I hope your husband will bear your humour less patiently than I have done.

Oliv. My husband!—dost think my husband shall contradict my will? Oh, I long to set a pattern to those milky wives, whose mean compliances degrade the sex.

Gar. Opportune! [*Aside.*

Oliv. The only husband on record who knew how to treat a wife was Socrates; and though his lady was a Grecian, I have some reason to believe her

descendants matched into our family; and never shall my tame submission disgrace my ancestry.

Gar. Heavens! why have you never curbed this intemperate spirit, Don Cæsar?

Oliv. [*Starting.*] Curbed, sir! talk thus to your groom—curbs and bridles for a woman's tongue!

Gar. Not for yours, lady, truly! 'tis too late. But had the torrent, now so overbearing, been taken at its spring, it might have been stemmed, and turned in gentle streamlets at the master's pleasure.

Oliv. A mistake, friend!—my spirit, at its spring, was too powerful for any master.

Gar. Indeed!—perhaps you may meet a Petruchio, gentle Catherine, yet.

Oliv. But no gentle Catherine will he find me, believe it.——Catherine! why, she had not the spirit of a roasted chesnut—a few big words, an empty oath, and a scanty dinner, made her as submissive as a spaniel. My fire will not be so soon extinguished—it shall resist big words, oaths and starving.

Min. I believe so, indeed; help the poor gentleman, I say, to whose fate you fall!

Gar. Don Cæsar, adieu! My commiseration for your fate subdues the resentment I should otherwise feel at your endeavouring to deceive me into such a marriage.

Oliv. Marriage! oh, mercy!—Is this Don Garcia? [*Apart to* CÆSAR.

Cæsar. Yes, termagant!

Oliv. O, what a misfortune! Why did you not tell me it was the gentleman you designed to marry me to?—Oh, sir! all that is past was in sport; a contrivance between my maid and me: I have no spirit at all—I am as patient as poverty.

Gar. This mask fits too ill on your features fair lady: I have seen you without disguise, and rejoice in your ignorance of my name, since, but for that,

my peaceful home might have become the seat of perpetual discord.

Min. Ay, sir, you would never have known what a quiet hour——

Oliv. [*Strikes her.*] Impertinence!—Indeed, sir, I can be as gentle and forbearing as a pet lamb.

Gar. I cannot doubt it, madam; the proofs of your placidity are very striking—But, adieu; though I shall pray for your conversion, rather than have the honour of it—I'd turn Dominican, and condemn myself to perpetual celibacy. [*Exit.*

Cæsar. Now, hussy!—now, hussy!—what do you expect?

Oliv. Dear me! how can you be so unreasonable! did ever daughter do more to oblige a father? I absolutely begged the man to have me.

Cæsar. Yes, vixen! after you had made him detest ye; what, I suppose, he had not hit your fancy, madam; though there is not, in all Spain, a man of prettier conversation.

Oliv. Yes, he has a very pretty kind of conversation; 'tis like a parenthesis

Cæsar. Like a parenthesis!

Oliv. Yes, it might be all left out and never missed. However, I thought him a modest kind of a well-meaning young man, and that he would make a pretty sort of a husband—for, notwithstanding his blustering, had I been his wife, in three months he should have been as humble and complaisant as——

Cæsar. Ay, there it is—there it is!—that spirit of yours, hussy, you can neither conquer nor conceal: but I'll find a way to tame it, I'll warrant me. [*Exit.*

[OLIVIA *and* MINETTE *follow him with their eyes, and then burst into a laugh.*

Min. Well, madam, I give you joy! had other ladies as much success in getting lovers, as you have in getting rid of yours, what contented faces we should see!

Oliv. But to what purpose do I get rid of them, whilst they rise in succession like monthly pinks? Was there ever any thing so provoking?—After some quiet, and believing the men had ceased to trouble themselves about me, no less than two proposals have been made to my inexorable father this very day—What will become of me?

Min. What should become of you? You'll choose one from the pair, I hope. Believe me, madam, the only way to get rid of the impertinence of lovers, is to take one, and make him a scarecrow to the rest.

Oliv. Oh, but I cannot!—Invention assist me this one day!

Min. Upon my word, madam, invention owes you nothing; and I am afraid you can draw on that bank no longer.—You must trust to your established character of vixen.

Oliv. But that won't frighten them all, you know, though it did its business with sober Don Garcia. The brave General Antonio would have made a property of me, in spite of every thing, had I not luckily discovered his antipathy to cats, and so scared the hero, by pretending an immoderate passion for young kittens.

Min. Yes, but you was still harder pushed by the Castilian Count, and his engraved genealogy from Noah.

Oliv. Oh, he would have kept his post as immovably as the griffins at his gate, had I not very seriously imparted to him, that my mother's great uncle sold oranges in Arragon.

Min. And pray, madam, if I may be so bold, who is the next gentleman?

Oliv. Oh, Don Vincentio, who distracts every body with his skill in music. He ought to be married to a Viol de Gamba. I bless my stars I have never yet had a miser in my list—on such a character

all art would be lost, and nothing but an earthquake, to swallow up my estate, could save me.

Min. Well, if some one did but know, how happy would some one be, that for his sake——

Oliv. Now, don't be impertinent, Minette. You have several times attempted to slide yourself into a secret, which I am resolved to keep to myself. Continue faithful, and suppress your curiosity. [*Exit.*

Min. Suppress my curiosity, madam!—why, I am a chambermaid, and a sorry one too, it should seem, to have been in your confidence two years, and never have got the master-secret yet. I never was six weeks in a family before but I knew every secret they had in it for three generations; ay, and I'll know this too, or I'll blow up all her plans, and declare to the world, that she is no more a vixen than other fine ladies—they have most of them a touch on't. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at DONNA LAURA'S.

Enter LAURA, *followed by* CARLOS.

Car. Nay, madam, you may as well stop here, for I'll follow you through every apartment, but I will be heard. [*Seizing her hand.*

Laura. This insolence is not to be endured; within my own walls, to be thus——

Car. The time has been, when within your walls I might be master.

Laura. Yes, you were then master of my heart; that gave you a right which——

Car. You have now transferred to another.

[*Flinging away her hand.*

Laura. Well, sir!

Car. "Well, sir!"—Unblushing acknowledgment! False, fickle woman!

Laura. Because I have luckily got the start of you; in a few weeks I should have been the accuser, and you the false and fickle.

Car. And, to secure yourself from that disgrace, you prudently looked out in time for another lover.

Laura. I can pardon your sneer, because you are mortified.

Car. Mortified!

Laura. Yes, mortified to the soul, Carlos!

Car. [*Stamping.*] Madam! madam!

Laura. This rage would have been all cool insolence, had I waited for your change—Scarcely would you have deigned to form a phrase of pity for me; perhaps have bid me forget a man no longer worthy my attachment, and recommended me to hartshorn and my woman.

Car. Has any hour, since I have first known you, given you cause for such unjust——

Laura. Yes, every hour—Now, Carlos, I bring thee to the test!—You saw, you liked, you loved me; was there no fond trusting woman whom you deserted to indulge the transient passion? Yes, one blessed with beauty, gentleness, and youth; one, who more than her own being loved thee, who made thee rich, and whom thou madest thy wife.

Car. My wife!—here's a turn! So to revenge the quarrels of my wife——

Laura. No, do not mistake me—what I have done was merely to indulge myself, without more regard to your feelings, than you had to hers.

Car. And you dare avow to my face, that you have a passion for another?

Laura. I do, and—for I am above disguise, I confess, so tender is my love for Florio, it has scarcely left a trace of that I once avowed for Carlos.

Car. Well, madam, if I hear this without some sudden vengeance on the tongue which speaks it, thank the annihilation of that passion, whose remembrance is as dead in my bosom as in yours. Let us, however, part friends, and with a mutual acquittal of every obligation—so give up the settlement of that estate, which left me almost a beggar.

Laura. Give it up!—ha! ha!——no, Carlos, you consigned me that estate as a proof of love; do not imagine, then, I'll give up the only part of our connexion of which I am not ashamed.

Car. Base woman! you know 'twas not a voluntary gift—after having in vain practised on my fondness, whilst in a state of intoxication, you prevailed on me to sign the deed, which you had artfully prepared for the purpose—therefore, you must restore it.

Laura. Never, never.

Car. Ruin is in the word!—Call it back, madam, or I'll be revenged on thee in thy heart's dearest object—thy minion Florio!——*he* shall not riot on my fortune.

Laura. Ha! ha! ha! Florio is safe—your lands are sold, and in another country we shall enjoy the blessing of thy fond passion, whilst that passion is indulging itself in hatred and execrations. [*Exit.*

Car. My vengeance shall first fall on her. [*Following.*] No, he shall be the first victim, or 'twill be incomplete.—Reduced to poverty, I cannot live:—— Oh, folly! where are now all the gilded prospects of my youth? Had I——but 'tis too late to look back, ——remorse attends the past, and ruin—ruin waits me in the future!

SCENE II.

DON CÆSAR'S.

VICTORIA *enters, perusing a letter; enter* OLIVIA.

Oliv. [*Speaks as entering.*] If my father should inquire for me, tell him I am in Donna Victoria's apartment.—Smiling, I protest! my dear gloomy cousin, where have you purchased that sun-shiny look?

Vict. It is but April sun-shine, I fear; but who could resist such a temptation to smile? a letter from Donna Laura, my husband's mistress, styling me her dearest Florio! her life! her soul! and complaining of a twelve hours absence, as the bitterest misfortune.

Oliv. Ha! ha! ha! most doughty Don! pray, let us see you in your feather and doublet; as a Cavaliero, it seems, you are formidable. So suddenly to rob your husband of his charmer's heart! you must have used some witchery.

Vict. Yes, powerful witchery—the knowledge of my sex. Oh! did the men but know us, as well as we do ourselves;—but, thank fate, they do not—'twould be dangerous.

Oliv. What, I suppose, you praised her understanding, was captivated by her wit, and absolutely struck dumb by the amazing beauties of—her mind.

Vict. Oh, no—that's the mode prescribed by the essayists on the female heart—ha! ha! ha!—Not a woman breathing, from fifteen to fifty, but would

rather have a compliment to the tip of her ear, or the turn of her ancle, than a volume in praise of her intellects.

Oliv. So, flattery, then, is your boasted pill?

Vict. No, that's only the occasional gilding; but 'tis in vain to attempt a description of what changed its nature with every moment. I was now attentive —now gay—then tender, then careless. I strove rather to convince her that I was charming, than that I myself was charmed; and when I saw love's arrow quivering in her heart, instead of falling at her feet, sung a triumphant air, and remembered a sudden engagement.

Oliv. [*Archly.*] Would you have done so, had you been a man?

Vict. Assuredly—knowing what I now do as a woman.

Oliv. But can all this be worth while, merely to rival a fickle husband with one woman, whilst he is setting his feather, perhaps, at half a score others?

Vict. To rival him was not my first motive. The Portuguese robbed me of his heart; I concluded she had fascinations which nature had denied to me; it was impossible to visit her as a woman; I, therefore, assumed the cavalier to study her, that I might, if possible, be to my Carlos, all he found in her.

Oliv. Pretty humble creature!

Vict. In this adventure I learnt more than I expected;—my (oh, cruel!) my husband has given this woman an estate, almost all that his dissipations had left us.

Oliv. Indeed!

Vict. To make him more culpable, it was my estate; it was that fortune which my lavish love had made his, without securing it to my children.

Oliv. How could you be so improvident?

Vict. Alas! I trusted him with my heart, with

my happiness, without restriction. Should I have shown a greater solicitude for any thing than for these?

Oliv. The event proves that you should; but how can you be thus passive in your sorrow? since I had assumed the man, I'd make him feel a man's resentment for such injuries.

Vict. Oh, Olivia! what resentment can I show to him I have vowed to honour, and whom both my duty and my heart compel me yet to love?

Oliv. Why, really now, I think—positively, there's no thinking about it; 'tis among the arcana of the married life, I suppose.

Vict. You, who know me, can judge how I suffered in prosecuting my plan. I have thrown off the delicacy of sex; I have worn the mask of love to the destroyer of my peace—but the object is too great to be abandoned—nothing less than to save my husband from ruin, and to restore him, again a lover, to my faithful bosom.

Oliv. Well, I confess, Victoria, I hardly know whether most to blame or praise you; but, with the rest of the world, I suppose, your success will determine me.

Enter GASPER.

Gasp. Pray, madam, are your wedding shoes ready? [*To* OLIVIA.

Oliv. Insolence!——I can scarcely ever keep up the vixen to this fellow. [*Apart to* VICTORIA.

Gasp. You'll want them, ma'am, to-morrow morning, that's all—so I came to prepare ye.

Oliv. I want wedding-shoes to-morrow! If you are kept on water gruel till I marry, that plump face of yours will be chap-fallen, I believe.

Gasp. Yes, truly, I believe so too. Lack-a-day, did you sup[illegible] ur

own wedding? no such glad tidings for you, lady, believe me.—You married! I am sure the man who ties himself to you, ought to be half a salamander, and able to live on fire.

Oliv. What marriage, then, is it you do me the honour to inform me of?

Gasp. Why, your father's marriage. You'll have a mother-in-law to-morrow, and having, like a dutiful daughter, danced at the wedding, be immured in a convent for life.

Oliv. Immured in a convent! then I'll raise sedition in the sisterhood, depose the abbess, and turn the confessor's chair to a go-cart.

Gasp. So, the threat of the mother-in-law, which I thought would be worse than that of the abbess, does not frighten ye?

Oliv. No, because my father dares not give me one. —Marry, without my consent! no, no, he'll never think of it, depend on't; however, lest the fit should grow strong upon him, I'll go and administer my volatiles to keep it under. [*Exit.*

Gasp. Administer them cautiously then; too strong a dose of your volatiles would make the fit stubborn. Who'd think that pretty arch look belonged to a termagant? what a pity! 'twould be worth a thousand ducats to cure her.

Vict. Has Inis told you I wanted to converse with you in private, Gasper?

Gasp. Oh, yes, madam, and I took particular notice, that it was to be in private——Sure, says I, Mrs. Inis, Madam Victoria has not taken a fancy to me, and is going to break her mind.

Vict. Whimsical! ha! ha! suppose I should, Gasper?

Gasp. Why, then, madam, I should say, fortune had used you devilish scurvily, to give you a greybeard in a livery. I know well enough, that some young ladies have given themselves to grey-beards

in a gilded coach, and others have run away with a handsome youth in worsted lace; they each had their apology; but if you run away with me—pardon me, madam, I could not stand the ridicule.

Vict. Oh, very well, but if you refuse to run away with me, will you do me another favour?

Gasp. Any thing you'll order, madam, except dancing a fandango.

Vict. You have seen my rich old uncle in the country?

Gasp. What, Don Sancho, who, with two-thirds of a century in his face, affects the misdemeanors of youth; hides his baldness with amber locks, and complains of the tooth-ach, to make you believe that the two rows of ivory he carries in his head grew there.

Vict. Oh, you know him, I find; could you assume his character for an hour, and make love for him? you know, it must be in the style of King Roderigo the First.

Gasp. Hang it! I am rather too near his own age; to appear an old man with effect, one should not be above twenty; 'tis always so on the stage.

Vict. Pho! you might pass for Juan's grandson.

Gasp. Nay, if your ladyship condescends to flatter me, you have me.

Vict. Then follow me; for Don Cæsar, I hear, is approaching—in the garden I'll make you acquainted with my plan, and impress on your mind every trait of my uncle's character. If you can hit him off, the arts of Laura shall be foiled, and Carlos be again Victoria's. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Don Cæsar, *followed by* Olivia.

Cæsar. No, no, 'tis too late—no coaxings; I am resolved, I say.

Oliv. But it is not too late, and you sha'n't be resolved, I say. Indeed, now, I'll be upon my guard

with the next Don—what's his name? not a trace of the Xantippe left—I'll study to be charming.

Cæsar. Nay, you need not study it, you are always charming enough, if you would but hold your tongue.

Oliv. Do you think so? then to the next lover I won't open my lips; I'll answer every thing he says with a smile, and if he asks me to have him, drop a courtesy of thankfulness.

Cæsar. Pshaw! that's too much t'other way; you are always either above the mark or below it; you must talk, but talk with good humour. Can't you look gently and prettily, now, as I do? and say, yes, sir, and no, sir; and 'tis very fine weather, sir; and, pray, sir, were you at the ball last night? and, I caught a sad cold the other evening; and, bless me! I hear Lucinda has run away with her footman, and Don Philip has married his housemaid.——That's the way agreeable ladies talk, you never hear any thing else.

Oliv. Very true; and you shall see me as agreeable as the best of them, if you won't give me a mother-in-law to snub me, and set me tasks, and to take up all the fine apartments, and send up poor little Livy to lodge next the stars.

Cæsar. Ha! if thou wert but always thus soft and good-humoured, no mother-in-law in Spain, though she brought the Castiles for her portion, should have power to snub thee. But, Livy, the trial's at hand, for at this moment do I expect Don Vincentio to visit you. He is but just returned from England and, probably, has yet heard only of your beauty and fortune; I hope it is not from you he will learn the other part of your character.

Oliv. This moment expect him! two new lovers in a day!

Cæsar. Beginning already, as I hope to live! ay, I see 'tis in vain; I'll send him an excuse, and marry Marcella before night.

Oliv. Oh, no! upon my obedience, I promise to be just the soft, civil creature, you have described.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Don Vincentio is below, sir.

Cæsar. I'll wait upon him——well, go and collect all your smiles and your simpers, and remember all I have said to you;—be gentle, and talk pretty little small talk, d'ye hear? and if you please him, you shall have the portion of a Dutch burgomaster's daughter, and the pin-money of a princess, you jade you.—I think at last, I have done it; the fear of this mother-in-law will keep down the fiend in her, if any thing can. [*Exit.*

Oliv. Hah! my poor father, your anxieties will never end till you bring Don Julio. But what shall I do with this Vincentio?—I fear he is so perfectly harmonized, that to put him in an ill temper will be impracticable.—I must try, however; if 'tis possible to find a discord in him, I'll touch the string. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Another Apartment.

Enter VINCENTIO *and* CÆSAR.

Vin. Presto, presto, signor! where is the Olivia?—not a moment to spare. I left off in all the fury of composition; minums and crotchets have been battling it through my head the whole day, and trying a semibreve in G sharp has made me as flat as double F.

Cæsar. Sharp and flat!—trying a semibreve!—oh—gad, sir! I had like not to have understood you! but a semibreve is something of a demi-culverin, I take it; and you have been practising the art military.

Vin. Art military:—what, sir! are you unacquainted with music?

Cæsar. Music! oh! I ask pardon; then you are fond of music——'ware of discords! [*Aside.*

Vin. Fond of it! devoted to it.—I composed a thing to-day, in all the gusto of Sacchini and the sweetness of Gluck. But this recreant finger fails me in composing a passage in E octave: if it does not gain more elastic vigour in a week, I shall be tempted to have it amputated, and supply the shake with a spring.

Cæsar. Mercy! amputate a finger to supply a shake!

Vin. Oh, that's a trifle in the road to reputation—to be talked of is the summum bonum of this life.—A young man of rank should not glide through the world, without a distinguished rage, or, as they call it in England—a hobby-horse.

Cæsar. A hobby-horse!

Vin. Yes; that is, every man of figure determines on setting out in life, in that land of liberty, in what line to ruin himself; and that choice is called his hobby-horse. One makes the turf his scene of action—another drives about tall phaetons, to peep into their neighbour's garret windows; and a third rides his hobby-horse in parliament, where it jerks him, sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other; sometimes in, and sometimes out; till at length he is jerked out of his honesty, and his constituents out of their freedom.

Cæsar. Ay!—Well, 'tis a wonder, that with such sort of hobby-horses as these, they should still outride all the world, to the goal of glory.

Vin. This is all cantabile; nothing to do with the subject of the piece, which is Donna Olivia;—pray give me the key-note to her heart.

Cæsar. Upon my word, signor, to speak in your own phrase, I believe that note has never yet been sounded.—Ah! here she comes! look at her.—Isn't she a fine girl?

Vin. Touching! Musical I'll be sworn! her very air is harmonious!

Cæsar. [*Aside.*] I wish thou may'st find her tongue so.

Enter OLIVIA, *courtesies profoundly to each.*

Daughter, receive Don Vincentio—his rank, fortune, and merit, entitle him to the heiress of a grandee; but he is contented to become my son-in-law, if you can please him. [OLIVIA *courtesies again.*

Vin. Please me! she entrances me! Her presence thrills me like a cadenza of Pachierotti's, and every nerve vibrates to the music of her looks.

Her step andante gently moves,
Pianos glance from either eye;
Oh, how larghetto is the heart
That charms so forte can defy!

Donna Olivia, will you be contented to receive me as a lover?

Oliv. Yes, sir—No, sir.

Vin. Yes, sir! no, sir! bewitching timidity!

Cæsar. Yes, sir, she's remarkably timid.—She's in the right cue, I see. [*Aside.*

Vin. 'Tis clear you have never travelled—I shall be delighted to show you England.—You will there see how entirely timidity is banished the sex. You must affect a marked character, and maintain it at all hazards.

Oliv. 'Tis a very fine day, sir.

Vin. Madam!

Oliv. I caught a sad cold the other evening.—Pray, was you at the ball last night?

Vin. What ball, fair lady?

Oliv. Bless me! they say Lucinda has run away with her footman, and Don Philip has married his housemaid.—Now am I not very agreeable?

[*Apart to* Don Cæsar.

Cæsar. Oh! such perverse obedience!

Vin. Really, madam, I have not the honour to know Don Philip and Lucinda—nor am I happy enough entirely to comprehend you.

Oliv. No! I only meant to be agreeable—but, perhaps, you have no taste for pretty little small talk?

Vin. Pretty little small talk!

Oliv. A marked character you admire; so do I—I dote on it.—I would not resemble the rest of the world in any thing.

Vin. My taste to the fiftieth part of a crochet!—We shall agree admirably when we are married.

Oliv. And that will be unlike the rest of the world, and therefore, charming!

Cæsar. [*Aside.*] It will do! I have hit her humour at last. Why didn't this young dog offer himself before?

Oliv. I believe, I have the honour to carry my taste that way farther than you, Don Vincentio.—Pray, now, what is your usual style in living?

Vin. My winters I spend in Madrid, as other people do. My summers I drawl through at my castle——

Oliv. As other people do!—and yet you pretend to taste and singularity, ha! ha! ha! Good Don Vincentio, never talk of a marked character again. Go into the country in July, to smell roses and woodbines, when every body regales on their fragrance! Now, I would rusticate only in winter, and my bleak

castle should be decorated with verdure and flowers, amidst the soft zephyrs of December.

Cæsar. [*Aside.*] Oh, she'll go too far!

Oliv. On the leafless trees I would hang green branches—the labour of silk-worms, and, therefore, natural; whilst my rose-shrubs and myrtles should be scented by the first perfumers in Italy. Unnatural, indeed, but, therefore, singular and striking.

Vin. Oh, charming! you beat me, where I thought myself the strongest. Would they but establish newspapers here, to paragraph our singularities, we should be the most envied couple in Spain!

Cæsar. [*Aside.*] By St. Anthony, he is as mad as she is!

Vin. What say you, Don Cæsar? Olivia, and her winter garden, and I and my music.

Oliv. Music, did you say? Music! I am passionately fond of that!

Cæsar. She has saved my life! I thought she was going to knock down his hobby-horse. [*Aside.*

Vin. You enchant me! I have the finest band in Madrid—My first violin draws a longer bow than Giardini; my clarionets, my viol de gamba——Oh, you shall have such concerts!

Oliv. Concerts! Pardon me there—My passion is a single instrument.

Vin. That's carrying singularity very far indeed! I love a crash; so does every body of taste.

Oliv. But my taste isn't like every body's; my nerves are so particularly fine, that more than one instrument overpowers them.

Vin. Pray tell me the name of that one: I am sure it must be the most elegant and captivating in the world.—I am impatient to know it.—We'll have no other instrument in Spain, and I will study to become its master, that I may woo you with its music. Charming Olivia! tell me, is it a harpsichord? a piano forte? a pentachord? a harp?

Oliv. You have it, you have it; a harp—yes, a Jew's harp is to me the only instrument. Are you not charmed with the delightful h—u—m of its base, running on the ear like the distant rumble of a state coach? It presents the idea of vastness and importance to the mind. The moment you are its master —I'll give you my hand.

Vin. Da capo, madam, da capo! a Jew's harp!

Oliv. Bless me, sir, don't I tell you so? Violins chi me; clarionets, by sympathy, hurt my lungs; and, instead of maintaining a band under my roof, I would not keep a servant who knew a bassoon from the flute, or could tell whether he heard a jigg, or a canzonetta.

Cæsar. Oh, thou perverse one! you know you love concerts—you know you do. [*In great agitation.*

Oliv. I detest them! It's vulgar custom that attaches people to the sound of fifty different instruments at once; 'twould be as well to talk on the same subject in fifty different tongues. A band! 'tis a mere olio of sound! I'd rather listen to a three stringed guitar, serenading a sempstress in some neighbouring garret.

Cæsar. Oh, you——Don Vincentio, this is nothing but perverseness, wicked perverseness. Hussy!—didn't you shake when you mentioned a garret didn't bread and water and a step-mother come into your head at the same time?

Vin. Piano, piano, good sir! Spare yourself all farther trouble. Should the Princess of Guzarat, and all her diamond mines, offer themselves, I would not accept them in lieu of my band—a band that has half ruined me to collect. I would have allowed Donna Olivia a blooming garden in winter; I would even have procured barrenness and snow for her in the dog-days; but to have my band insulted! to have my knowledge in music slighted!—to be roused from all the energies of composition, by the

drone of a Jew's harp!—I cannot breathe under the idea.

Cæsar. Then—then you refuse her, sir?

Vin. I cannot use so harsh a word—I take my leave of the lady—Adieu, madam—I leave you to enjoy your solos, whilst I fly to the raptures of a crash. [*Exit.*

[CÆSAR *goes up to her, and looks her in the Face; then goes off without speaking.*

Oliv. Mercy! that silent anger is terrifying! I read a young mother-in-law, and an old lady abbess, in every line of his face.

Enter VICTORIA.

Well, you heard the whole, I suppose?—heard poor unhappy me scorned and rejected.

Vict. I heard you in imminent danger; and expected Signor Da Capo would have snapped you up, in spite of caprice and extravagance.

Oliv. Oh, they charmed, instead of scaring him. I soon found that my only chance was to fall across his caprice. Where is the philosopher who could withstand that?

Vict. But what, my good cousin, does all this tend to?

Oliv. I dare say you can guess. Penelope had never cheated her lovers with a never-ending web, had she not had an Ulysses.

Vict. An Ulysses! what, are you then married?

Oliv. O, no, not yet! but, believe me, my design is not to lead apes; nor is my heart an icicle. If you choose to know more, put on your veil, and slip with me through the garden to the Prado.

Vict. I can't, indeed. I am this moment going to dress *en homme*, to visit the impatient Portuguese.

Oliv. Send an excuse; for, positively, you go with me. Heaven and earth! I am going to meet a

man! whom I have been fool enough to dream and think of these two years, and I don't know that ever he thought of me in his life

Vict. Two years discovering that?

Oliv. He has been abroad. The only time I ever saw him was at the Duchess of Medina's—there were a thousand people; and he was so elegant, so careless, so handsome!—In a word, though he set off for France the next morning, by some witchcraft or other, he has been before my eyes ever since.

Vict. Was the impression mutual?

Oliv. He hardly noticed me. I was then a bashful thing, just out of a convent, and shrunk from observation.

Vict. Why, I thought you were going to meet him?

Oliv. To be sure; I sent him a command this morning, to be at the Prado. I am determined to find out if his heart is engaged, and if it is——

Vict. You'll cross your arms, and crown your brow with willows?

Oliv. No, positively; not whilst we have myrtles. I would prefer Julio, 'tis true, to all his sex; but if he is stupid enough to be insensible to me, I sha'n't, for that reason, pine like a girl, on chalk and oatmeal.—No, no; in that case I shall form a new plan, and treat my future lovers with more civility.

Vict. You are the only woman in love, I ever heard talk reasonably.

Oliv. Well, prepare for the Prado, and I'll give you a lesson against your days of widowhood. Don't you wish this the moment, Victoria? A pretty widow at four-and-twenty has more subjects, and a wider empire, than the first monarch upon earth. I long to see you in your weeds.

Vict. Never may you see them! Oh, Olivia! my happiness, my life, depend on my husband. The fond

hope of still being united to him gives me spirits in my affliction, and enables me to support even the period of his neglect with patience. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A long Street.

JULIO *enters from a Garden Gate, with precipitation; a* SERVANT *within fastens the Gate.*

Julio. Yes, yes, bar the gate fast, Cerberus, lest some other curious traveller should stumble on your confines.—If ever I am so caught again—

GARCIA *enters, going hastily across,* JULIO *seizes him.*

Don Garcia, never make love to a woman in a veil.

Gar. Why so, pr'ythee? Veils and secrecy are the chief ingredients in a Spanish amour; but in two years, Julio, thou art grown absolutely French.

Julio. That may be; but if ever I trust to a veil again, may no lovely, blooming beauty ever trust me. Why, dost know, I have been an hour at the feet of a creature whose first birth-day must have been kept the latter end of the last century, and whose

trembling weak voice, I mistook for the timid cadence of bashful fifteen!

Gar. Ha! ha! ha! What a happiness to have seen thee in thy raptures, petitioning for a half glance only of the charms the envious veil concealed!

Julio. Yes; and when she unveiled her Gothic countenance, to render the thing completely ridiculous, she began moralizing; and positively would not let me out of the snare, till I had persuaded her she had worked a conversion, and that I'd never make love—but in an honest way again.

Gar. Oh, that honest way of love-making is delightful to be sure! I had a dose of it this morning; but, happily, the ladies have not yet learned to veil their tempers, though they have their faces.

Enter Don Vincentio.

Vin. Julio! Garcia! congratulate me!—Such an escape!

Julio. What have you escaped?

Vin. Matrimony.

Gar. Nay, then our congratulations may be mutual. I have had a matrimonial escape too, this very day. I was almost on the brink of the ceremony with the veriest Xantippe!

Vin. Oh, that was not my case—mine was a sweet creature, all elegance, all life.

Julio. Then where's the cause of congratulation?

Vin. Cause!—why she's ignorant of music! prefers a jig to a canzonetta, and a Jew's harp to a pentachord.

Gar. Had my nymph no other fault, I would pardon that, for she was lovely and rich.

Vin. Mine, too, was lovely and rich; and, I'll be sworn, as ignorant of scolding, as of the gamut!—but not to know music!

Julio. Gentle, lovely, and rich! and ignorant only of music!

Gar. A venial crime, indeed! if the sweet creature will marry me, she shall carry a Jew's harp always in her train, as a Scotch laird does his bagpipes. I wish you'd give me your interest.

Vin. Oh, most willingly, if thou hast so gross an inclination; I'll name thee as a dull-soul'd, largo fellow, to her father, Don Cæsar.

Gar. Cæsar!—what Don Cæsar?

Vin. De Zuniga.

Gar. Impossible!

Vin. Oh, I'll answer for her mother. So much is Don Zuniga her father, that he does not know a semibreve from a culverin!

Gar. The name of the lady?

Vin. Olivia.

Gar. Why, you must be mad—that's my termagant!

Vin. Termagant!—ha! ha! ha! Thou hast certainly some vixen of a mistress, who infects thy ears towards the whole sex. Olivia is timid and elegant.

Gar. By Juno, there never existed such a scold!

Vin. By Orpheus, there never was a gayer tempered creature!—Spirit enough to be charming, that's all. If she loved harmony, I'd marry her tomorrow.

Julio. Ha! ha! what a ridiculous jangle! 'Tis evident you speak of two different women.

Gar. I speak of Donna Olivia, heiress to Don Cæsar de Zuniga.

Vin. I speak of the heiress of Don Cæsar de Zuniga, who is called Donna Olivia.

Gar. I perceive you mean to insult me.

Vin. Your perceptions are very rapid, sir, but if you choose to think so, I'll settle that point with you immediately: but, for fear of consequences, I'll fly home, and add the last bar to my concerto, and then meet you where you please.

Julio. Pho! this is evidently misapprehension

To clear the matter up, I'll visit the lady, if you'll introduce me, Vincentio;—but you shall both promise to be governed in this dispute by my decision.

Vin. I'll introduce you with joy, if you'll try to persuade her of the necessity of music, and the charms of harmony.

Gar. Yes, she needs that——You'll find her all war and discord.

Julio. Come, no more, Garcia; thou art but a sort of male vixen thyself.—Melodious Vincentio, when shall I expect you?

Vin. This evening.

Julio. Not this evening; I have engaged to meet a goldfinch in a grove—then I shall have music, you rogue!

Vin. It won't, being at night.

Julio. Then I'll talk to it till the morning, and hear it pour out its matins to the rising sun. Call on me to-morrow; I'll then attend you to Donna Olivia, and declare faithfully the impression her character makes on me.—Come, Garcia, I must not leave you together, least his crotchets and your minums should fall into a crash of discords.

[*Exeunt, opposite sides.*

SCENE II.

The Prado.

Enter DON CARLOS.

Car. All hail to the powers of burgundy! Three flasks to my own share! What sorrows can stand against three flasks of burgundy? I was a damned

melancholy fellow this morning, going to shoot myself to get rid of my troubles.—Where are my troubles now? Gone to the moon, to look for my wits; and there, I hope, they'll remain together, if one cannot come back without t'other. But where is this indolent dog, Julio? He fit to receive appointments from ladies! Sure I have not missed the hour.—No, but seven yet—[*Looking at his watch.*]—Seven's the hour, by all the joys of burgundy! The rogue must be here—let's reconnoitre.

Enter VICTORIA *and* OLIVIA, *veiled, from the top.*

Oliv. Positively, mine's a pretty spark, to let me be first at the place of appointment. I have half resolved to go home again, to punish him.

Vict. I'll answer for its being but half a resolution—to make it entire, would be to punish yourself.—There's a solitary man—Is not that he?

Oliv. I think not. If he'd please to turn his face this way——

Vict. That's impossible, while the loadstone is the other way. He is looking at the woman in the next walk—Can't you disturb him?

Oliv. [*Screams.*] Oh! a frightful frog!

[CARLOS *turns.*

Vict. Heavens, 'tis my husband!

Oliv. Your husband! Is that Don Carlos?

Vict. It is indeed.

Oliv. Why, really, now I see the man, I don't wonder that you are in no hurry for your weeds. He is moving towards us.

Vict. I cannot speak to him, and yet my soul flies to meet him.

Car. Pray, lady, what occasioned that pretty scream? I shrewdly suspect it was a trap.

Oliv. A trap! ha! ha! ha!—a trap for you!

Car. Why not, madam? Zounds, a man six feet

high, and three flasks of burgundy in his head, is worth laying a trap for.

Oliv. Yes, unless he happens to be trapped before. 'Tis about two years since you was caught, I take it —Do keep farther off!—Odious? a married man!

Car. The devil! Is it posted under every saint in the street, that I am a married man?

Oliv. No, you carry the marks about you; that rueful phiz could never belong to a bachelor.—Besides, there's an odd appearance on your temples—does your hat sit easily?

Car. By all the thorns of matrimony, if——

Oliv. Poor man! how natural to swear by what one feels—but why were you in such haste to gather the thorns of matrimony? Bless us, had you but looked about you a little, what a market might have been made of that fine, proper, promising person of yours!

Car. Confound thee, confound thee! If thou art a wife, may thy husband plague thee with jealousies, and thou never be able to give him cause for them; and if thou art a maid, may'st thou be an old one! [*Going, meets* DON JULIO.] Oh, Julio, look not that way; there's a tongue will stun thee!

Julio. Heaven be praised! I love female prattle. A woman's tongue can never scare me. Which of these two goldfinches makes the music?

Car. Oh, this is as silent as a turtle—[*Taking* VICTORIA'S *hand*]—only coos now and then.—Perhaps you don't hate a married man, sweet one?

Vict. You guess right; I love a married man.

Car. Hah, say'st thou so? wilt thou love me?

Vict. Will you let me?

Car. Let thee, my charmer! how I'll cherish thee for't—What would I not give for thy heart!

Vict. I demand a price, that perhaps you cannot give—I ask unbounded love; but you have a wife.

Car. And, therefore, the readier to love every other woman; 'tis in your favour, child.

Vict. Will you love me ever?

Car. Ever! yes, ever; till we find each other dull company, and yawn, and talk of our neighbours for amusement.

Vict. Farewell! I suspected you to be a bad chapman, and that you would not reach my terms.

[*Going.*

Car. Nay, I'll come to your terms, if I can;—but move this way; I am fearful of that wood-pecker at your elbow—should she begin again, her noise will scare all the pretty loves that are playing about my heart. Don't turn your head towards them; if you like to listen to love tales, you'll meet fond pairs enough in this walk. [*Forcing her gently off.*

Julio. I really believe, though you deny it, that you are my destiny—that is, you fated me hither See; is not this your mandate?

[*Taking a letter from his pocket.*

Oliv. Oh, delightful! the scrawl of some chambermaid: or, perhaps, of your valet, to give you an air. What is it signed? Marriatornes? Tomasa? Sancha?

Julio. Nay, now I am convinced the letter is yours, since you abuse it: so you may as well confess?

Oliv. Suppose I should, you can't be sure that I do not deceive you.

Julio. True; but there is one point in which I have made a vow not to be deceived; therefore, the preliminary is, that you throw off your veil.

Oliv. My veil!

Julio. Positively, if you reject this article, our negociation ends.

Oliv. You have no right to offer articles, unless you own yourself conquered.

Julio. I own myself willing to be conquered, and

have, therefore, a right to make the best terms I can. Do you accede to the demand?

Oliv. Certainly not.

Julio. You had better.

Oliv. I protest I will not.

Julio. [*Aside.*] My life upon't, I make you. Why, madam, how absurd this is!—yet, 'tis of no consequence, for I know your features, as well as though I saw them.

Oliv. How can that be?

Julio. I judge of what you hide, by what I see—I could draw your picture.

Oliv. Charming! pray begin the portrait.

Julio. Imprimis, a broad high forehead, rounded at the top, like an old-fashioned gateway.

Oliv. Oh, horrid!

Julio. Little grey eyes, a sharp nose, and hair the colour of rusty prunella.

Oliv. Odious!

Julio. Pale cheeks, thin lips, and——

Oliv. Hold, hold, thou vilifier! [*Throws off her veil, he sinks on one knee.*] There! yes, kneel in contrition for your malicious libel.

Julio. Say rather, in adoration. What a charming creature!

Oliv. So, now for what lies on the other side.

Julio. A forehead formed by the graces; hair, which Cupid would steal for his bow-strings, were he not engaged in shooting through those sparkling hazel circlets, which nature has given you for eyes; lips! that 'twere a sin to call so; they are fresh-gathered rose-leaves, with the fragrant morning-dew still hanging on their rounded surface.

Oliv. Is that extemporaneous, or ready cut, for every woman who takes off her veil to you?

Julio. I believe, 'tis not extemporaneous; for nature, when she finished you, formed the sentiment

in my heart, and there it has been hid, till you, for whom it was formed, called it into words.

Oliv. Suppose I should understand, from all this, that you have a mind to be in love with me, would not you be finely caught?

Julio. Charmingly caught! if you'll let me understand, at the same time, that you have a mind to be in love with me.

Oliv. In love with a man! Heavens! I never loved any thing but a squirrel!

Julio. Make me your squirrel—I'll put on your chain, and gambol and play for ever at your side.

Oliv. But suppose you should have a mind to break the chain?

Julio. Then loosen it; for, if once that humour seizes me, restraint won't cure it. Let me spring and bound at liberty, and when I return to my lovely mistress, tired of all but her, fasten me again to your girdle, and kiss me while you chide.

Oliv. Your servant—to encourage you to leave me again?

Julio. No; to make returning to you the strongest attraction of my life. Why are you silent?

Oliv. I am debating, whether to be pleased or displeased at what you have said.

Julio. Well?

Oliv. You shall know when I have determined. My friend and yours are approaching this way, and they must not be interrupted.

Julio. 'Twould be barbarous—we'll retire as far off as you please.

Oliv. But we retire separately, sir; that lady is a woman of honour, and this moment of the greatest importance to her. You may, however, conduct me to the gate, on condition that you leave me instantly.

Julio. Leave her instantly—oh, then I know my cue. [*Exit together, at top.*

Enter CARLOS, *followed by* VICTORIA, *unveiled.*

Car. [*Looking back on her.*] My wife!

Vict. Oh, heavens! I will veil myself again. I will hide my face for ever from you, if you will still feast my ears with those soft vows, which, a moment since, you poured forth so eagerly.

Car. My wife!—making love to my own wife!

Vict. Why should one of the dearest moments of my life be to you so displeasing?

Car. So, I am caught in this snare, by way of agreeable surprise, I suppose.

Vict. 'Would you could think it so!

Car. No, madam! by heaven, 'tis a surprise fatal to every hope with which you may have flattered yourself. What! am I to be followed, haunted, watched?

Vict. Not to upbraid you. I followed you because my castle, without you, seemed a dreary desert. Indeed, I will never upbraid you.

Car. Generous assurance! never upbraid me—no, by heavens! I'll take care you never shall. She has touched my soul, but I dare not yield to the impression. Her softness is worse than death to me! [*Aside.*

Vict. 'Would I could find words to please you!

Car. You cannot; therefore leave me, or suffer me to go, without attempting to follow me.

Vict. Is it possible you can be so barbarous?

Car. Do not expostulate; your first vowed duty is obedience—that word so grating to your sex.

Vict. To me it was never grating; to obey you has been my joy; even now I will not dispute your will, though I feel, for the first time, obedience hateful. [*Going, and then turning back.*] Oh, Carlos! my dear Carlos! I go, but my soul remains with you. [*Exit.*

Car. Oh, horrible! had I not taken this harsh measure, I must have killed myself; for how could

I tell her that I have made her a beggar? better she should hate, detest me, than that my tenderness should give her a prospect of felicity, which now she can never taste. Oh, wine-created spirit! where art thou now? Madness, return to me again! for reason presents me nothing but despair.

Enter JULIO, *from the top.*

Julio. Carlos, who the devil can they be? my charming little witch was inflexible. I hope yours has been more communicative.

Car. Folly! Nonsense!

Julio. Folly! Nonsense! What, a pretty woman's smile!—but you married fellows have neither taste nor joy.

Car. Pshaw! [*Exit.*

Julio. Pshaw! that's a husband! Humph—suppose my fair one should want to debase me into such an animal; she can't have so much villany in her disposition: and yet, if she should? pho! it won't bear thinking about. If I do so mad a thing, it must be as cowards fight, without daring to reflect on the danger. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment in the House of DON VASQUEZ, MARCELLA'S *Father.*

Enter DON CÆSAR *and* DON VASQUEZ.

Cæsar. Well, Don Vasquez, and a——you——then I say, you have a mind that I should marry your daughter?

Vasq. It is sufficient, signor, that you have signified to us your intention—my daughter shall prove her gratitude, in her attention to your felicity

Cæsar. 'Egad, now it comes to the push! [*Aside.*] hem, hem!—but just nineteen, you say?

Vasq. Exactly, the eleventh of last month.

Cæsar. Pity it was not twenty.

Vasq. Why, a year can make no difference, I should think.

Cæsar. O, yes it does; a year's a great deal; they are so skittish at nineteen.

Vasq. Those who are skittish at nineteen, I fear, you won't find much mended at twenty. Marcella is very grave, and a pretty little, plump, fair——

Cæsar. Ay, fair again! pity she isn't brown, or olive—I like your olives.

Vasq. Brown and olive! you are very whimsical, my old friend!

Cæsar. Why, these fair girls are so stared at by the men; and the young fellows, now-a-days, have a damned impudent stare with them—'tis very abashing to a woman—'tis very distressing!

Vasq. Yes, so it is; but happily their distress is of that nature, that it generally goes off in a simper. But come, I'll send Marcella to you, and she will—

Cæsar. No, no, stay, my good friend. [*Gasping.*] You are in a violent hurry!

Vasq. Why, truly, signor, at our time of life, when we determine to marry, we have no time to lose.

Cæsar. Why, that's very true, and so—oh! St. Anthony, now it comes to the point!—but there can be no harm in looking at her—a look won't bind us for better for worse. [*Aside.*] Well then, if you have a mind, I say, you may let me see her.

[*Exit* VASQUEZ.

[CÆSAR *puts on his spectacles.*] Ay, here she comes. —I hear her—trip, trip, trip! I don't like that step.

A woman should always tread steadily, with dignity; it awes the men.

Enter VASQUEZ, *leading* MARCELLA.

Vasq. There, Marcella, behold your future husband; and remember, that your kindness to him will be the standard of your duty to me. [*Exit.*

Mar. Oh, heavens! [*Aside.*

Cæsar. Somehow, I am afraid to look round.

Mar. Surely he does not know that I am here! [*Coughs gently.*

Cæsar. So, she knows how to give an item, I find.

Mar. Pray, signor, have you any commands for me?

Cæsar. Hum!—not nonplussed at all! [*Looks around.*] Oh! that eye, I don't like that eye.

Mar. My father commanded me——

Cæsar. Yes, I know—I know. [*To her.*] Why, now I look again, there is a sort of a modest—Oh, that smile; that smile will never do. [*Aside.*

Mar. I understand, signor, that you have demanded my hand in marriage?

Cæsar. Upon my word, plump to the point! [*Aside.*] Yes, I did a sort of—I can't say but that I did——

Mar. I am not insensible of the honour you do me, sir, but—but——

Cæsar. But!—What, don't you like the thoughts of the match?

Mar. Oh, yes, sir, yes—exceedingly. I dare not say no. [*Aside.*

Cæsar. Oh, you do—exceedingly! What, I suppose, child, your head is full of jewels, and finery, and equipage? [*With ill humour.*

Mar. No, indeed, sir.

Cæsar. No, what then? what sort of a life do you expect to lead, when you are my wife? what pleasures do ye look forward to?

Mar. None.

Cæsar. Hey!

Mar. I shall obey my father, sir; I shall marry you; but I shall be most wretched! [*Weeps.*

Cæsar. Indeed!

Mar. There is not a fate I would not prefer;—but pardon me!

Cæsar. Go on, go on, I never was better pleased.

Mar. Pleased at my reluctance!

Cæsar. Never, never better pleased in my life;—so you had really, now, you young baggage, rather have me for a grandfather than a husband?

Mar. Forgive my frankness, sir—a thousand times?

Cæsar. My dear girl, let me kiss your hand.—'Egad! you've let me off charmingly. I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should have taken as violent an inclination to the match as your father has.

Mar. Dear sir, you charm me.

Cæsar. But hark ye!—you'll certainly incur your father's anger, if I don't take the refusal entirely on myself, which I will do, if you'll only assist me in a little business I have in hand.

Mar. Any thing to show my gratitude.

Cæsar. You must know I can't get my daughter to marry—there's nothing on earth will drive her to it, but the dread of a mother-in-law. Now if you will let it appear to her, that you and I are driving to the goal of matrimony, I believe it will do—what say you? shall we be lovers in play?

Mar. If you are sure it will be only in play.

Cæsar. Oh, my life upon't—but we must be very fond, you know.

Mar. To be sure—exceedingly tender; ha! ha! ha!

Cæsar. You must smile upon me, now and then, roguishly; and slide your hand into mine, when you are sure she sees you, and let me pat your cheek, and——

Mar. Oh, no farther, pray; that will be quite sufficient.

Cæsar. Gad, I begin to take a fancy to your rogue's face, now I'm in no danger; mayn't we—mayn't we salute sometimes? it will seem infinitely more natural.

Mar. Never! such an attempt would make me fly off at once.

Cæsar. Well, you must be lady governess in this business. I'll go home now, and fret madam about her young mother-in-law—By'e, sweeting!

Mar. By'e, charmer!

Cæsar. Oh, bless its pretty eyes! [*Exit.*

Mar. Bless its pretty spectacles! Ha! ha! ha! enter into a league with a cross old father against a daughter! why, how could he suspect me capable of so much treachery! I could not answer it to my conscience. No, no, I'll acquaint Donna Olivia with the plot; and, as in duty bound, we'll turn our arms against Don Cæsar. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

DONNA LAURA'S.

Enter DONNA LAURA *and* PEDRO.

Laura. Well, Pedro, hast thou seen Don Florio?

Ped. Yes, Donna.

Laura. How did he look when he read my letter?

Ped. Mortal well; I never see'd him look better—he'd got on a new cloak, and a——

Laura. Pho, blockhead! did he look pleased? did he kiss my name? did he press the billet to his bosom with all the warmth of love?

Ped. No, he didn't warm it that way; but he did another, for he put it into the fire.

Laura. How!

Ped. Yes, and when I spoke, he started, for, I think, he had forgot that I was by—so, says he, go home and tell Donna Laura I fly to her presence.

[*She waves her hand for him to go.*

Laura. Is it possible? so contemptuously to destroy the letter, in which my whole heart overflowed with tenderness! Oh, how idly I talk! he is here: his very voice pierces my heart! I dare not meet his eye thus discomposed! [*Exit.*

Enter VICTORIA, *in Men's Clothes, preceded by* SANCHA.

San. I will inform my mistress that you are here, Don Florio; I thought she had been in this apartment. [*Exit.*

Vict. Now must I, with a mind torn by anxieties, once more assume the lover of my husband's mistress—of the woman who has robbed me of his heart, and his children of their fortune. Sure my task is hard. Oh, love! Oh, married love, assist me! If I can, by any art, obtain from her that fatal deed, I shall save my little ones from ruin, and then—But I hear her step. [*Agitated, pressing her hand on her bosom.*] There! I have hid my griefs within my heart, and, now for all the impudence of an accomplished cavalier! [*Sings an air, sets her hat in a glass, dances a few steps, &c. then runs to* LAURA, *and seizes her hand.*] My lovely Laura!

Laura. That look speaks Laura loved, as well as lovely.

Vict. To be sure! Petrarch immortalized his Laura by his verses, and mine shall be immortal in my passion.

Laura. Oh, Florio, how deceitful! I know not what enchantment binds me to thee.

Vict. Me! my dear! is all this to me?

[*Playing carelessly with the feather in her hat.*

Laura. Yes, ingrate, thee!

Vict. Positively, Laura, you have these extravagancies so often, I wonder my passion can stand them. To be plain, those violences in your temper may make a pretty relief in the flat of matrimony, child, but they do not suit that state of freedom which is necessary to my happiness. It was by such destructive arts as these you cured Don Carlos of his love.

Laura. Cured Don Carlos! Oh, Florio! wert thou but as he is?

Vict. Why, you don't pretend he loves you still? [*Eagerly.*

Laura. Yes, most ardently and truly.

Vict. Hah!

Laura. If thou wouldst persuade me that thy passion is real, borrow his words, his looks, be a hypocrite one dear moment, and speak to me in all the phrensy of that love which warms the heart of Carlos.

Vict. The heart of Carlos!

Laura. Hah, that seemed a jealous pang—it gives my hopes new life. [*Aside.*] Yes, Florio, he, indeed, knows what it is to love. For me he forsook a beauteous wife; nay, and with me would forsake his country.

Vict. Villain! Villain!

Laura. Nay, let not the thought distress you thus;—Carlos I despise—he is the weakest of mankind.

Vict. 'Tis false, madam, you cannot despise him.—Carlos the weakest of mankind! Heavens! what woman could resist him! Persuasion sits on his tongue, and love, almighty love, triumphant in his eyes!

Laura. This is strange; you speak of your rival with the admiration of a mistress.

Vict. Laura! it is the fate of jealousy, as well as love, to see the charms of its object increased and heightened. I am jealous—jealous to distraction of Don Carlos; and cannot taste peace, unless you'll swear never to see him more.

Laura. I swear, joyfully swear, never to behold or speak to him again. When, dear youth, shall we retire to Portugal?—We are not safe here.

Vict. You know I am not rich.—You must first sell the lands my rival gave you.

[*Observing her with apprehension.*

Laura. 'Tis done—I have found a purchaser, and to-morrow the transfer will be finished.

Vict. [*Aside.*] Ah! I have now then nothing to trust to but the ingenuity of Gasper.—There is reason to fear Don Carlos had no right in that estate with which you suppose yourself endowed.

Laura. No right! what can have given you those suspicions?

Vict. A conversation with Juan his steward—who assures me that his master never had an estate in Leon.

Laura. Never! what, not by marriage?

Vict. Juan says so.

Laura. My blood runs cold; can I have taken pains to deceive myself?—Could I think so, I should be mad!

Vict. These doubts may soon be annihilated, or confirmed to certainty.—I have seen Don Sancho, the uncle of Victoria; he is now in Madrid.—You have told me that he once professed a passion for you.

Laura. Oh, to excess! but at that time I had another object.

Vict. Have you conversed with him much?

Laura. I never saw him nearer than from my balcony, where he used to ogle me through a glass, suspended by a riband, like an order of knighthood; he is weak enough to fancy it gives him an air of distinction—Ha! ha! But where can I find him? I must see him.

Vict. Write him a billet, and I will send it to his lodgings.

Laura. Instantly—Dear Florio, a new prospect opens to me—Don Sancho is rich and generous; and, by playing on his passions, his fortune may be a constant fund to us.—I'll dip my pen in flattery.

[*Exit.*

Vict. Base woman! how can I pity thee, or regret the steps which my duty obliges me to take? For myself, I would not swerve from the nicest line of rectitude, nor wear the shadow of deceit.—But, for my children!—Is there a parental heart that will not pardon me? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

DON CÆSAR'S.

Enter OLIVIA *and* MINETTE.

Oliv. Well, here we are in private—what is this charming intelligence of which thou art so full this morning?

Min. Why, ma'am, as I was in the balcony that overlooks Don Vasquez's garden, Donna Marcella

told me, that Don Cæsar had last night been to pay her a visit previous to their marriage, and—

Oliv. Their marriage! How can you give me the intelligence with such a look of joy? Their marriage! —what will become of me?

Min. Dear ma'am! if you'll but have patience.— She says that Don Cæsar and she are perfectly agreed—

Oliv. Still with that smirking face?—I can't have patience.

Min. Then, madam, if you won't let me tell the story, please to read it——Here's a letter from Donna Marcella.

Oliv. Why did you not give it me at first?

[*Reads.*

Min. Because I didn't like to be cut out of my story. If orators were obliged to come to the point at once, mercy on us! what tropes and figures we should lose!

Oliv. Oh, Minette! I give you leave to smirk again—listen. [*Reads.*] *I am more terrified at the idea of becoming your father's wife, than you are in the expectation of a stepmother; and Don Cæsar would be as loth as either of us.—He only means to frighten you into matrimony, and I have, on certain conditions, agreed to assist him; but, whatever you may hear, or see, be assured that nothing is so impossible, as that he should become the husband of Donna Marcella.*—Oh, delightful girl! how I love her for this!

Min. Yes, ma'am; and if you'd had patience, I should have told you that she's now here with Don Cæsar, in grave debate, how to begin the attack, which must force you to take shelter in the arms of a husband.

Oliv. Ah, no matter how they begin it! Let them amuse themselves in raising batteries; my reserved fire shall tumble them about their ears, in the moment my poor father is singing his Io's for victory.—

But here come the lovers.—Well, I protest now, sixteen and sixty is a very comely sight.—'Tis contrast gives effect to every thing.—Lud! how my father ogles! I had no idea he was such a sort of man.—I am really afraid he isn't quite so good as he should be!

Enter Don Cæsar, *leading* Marcella.

Cæsar. H—m! Madam looks very placid; we shall discompose her, or I am mistaken. [*Apart.*] So, Olivia, here's Donna Marcella come to visit you—though as matters are, that respect is due from you.

Oliv. I am sensible of the condescension.—My dear ma'am, how very good this is! [*Taking her hand.*

Cæsar. Yes, you'll think yourself wonderfully obliged, when you know all. [*Aside.*] Pray, Donna Marcella, what do you think of these apartments?—The furniture and decorations are my daughter's taste; would you wish them to remain, or will you give orders to have them changed?

Mar. Changed! undoubtedly; I can have nobody's taste govern my apartments but my own.

Cæsar. Ah, that touches! See how she looks!—[*Apart.*] They shall receive your orders.—You understand, I suppose, from this, that every thing is fixed on between Donna Marcella and me?

Oliv. Yes, sir, I understand it perfectly; and it gives me infinite pleasure.

Cæsar. Eh! pleasure?

Oliv. Entirely, sir——

Cæsar. Tol-de-rol! Ah, that won't do—that won't do! You can't hide it.—You are frightened out of your wits at the thoughts of a mother-in-law; especially a young, gay, handsome one.

Oliv. Pardon me, sir—the thought of a mother-in-law was indeed disagreeable; but her being young and gay qualifies it.—I hope, ma'am, you'll give us balls, and the most spirited parties. You can't think

how stupid we have been.—My dear father hates those things; but I hope now—

Cæsar. Hey! hey! hey! what's the meaning of all this? Why, hussy, don't you know you'll have no apartment but the garret?

Oliv. That will benefit my complexion, sir, by mending my health. 'Tis charming to sleep in an elevated situation.

Cæsar. Here! here's an obstinate perverse slut!

Oliv. Bless me, sir, are you angry that I look forward to your marriage without murmuring?

Cæsar. Yes, I am—yes, I am; you ought to murmur; and you ought to—to—to—

Oliv. Dear me! I find love, taken up late in life, has a bad effect on the temper.—I wish, my dear papa, you had felt the influence of Donna Marcella's charms somewhat sooner.

Cæsar. You do! you do! why this must be all put on.—This can't be real.

Oliv. Indeed, indeed it is; and I protest, your engagement with this lady has given me more pleasure than I have tasted ever since you began to tease me about a husband. You seemed determined to have a marriage in the family; and I hope, now, I shall live in quiet with my dear, sweet, young mother-in-law.

Cæsar. Oh, oh! [*Walking about.*] Was there ever —She doesn't care for a mother-in-law!—Can't frighten her!

Oliv. Sure my fate is very peculiar; that being pleased with your choice, and submitting, with humble duty, to your will, should be the cause of offence.

Cæsar. Hussy! I dont want you to be pleased with my choice—I don't want you to submit with humble duty to my will.—Where I do want you to submit, you rebel: you are a—you are——But I'll mortify that wayward spirit yet.

[*Exeunt* Don Cæsar *and* Marcella.

Min. Well, really, my master is in a piteous

passion; he seems more angry at your liking his marriage, than at your refusing to be married yourself.—Wouldn't it have been better, madam, to have affected discontent?

Oliv. To what purpose, but to lay myself open to fresh solicitations, in order to get rid of the evil I pretended to dread? Bless us! nothing can be more easy than for my father to be gratified, if he were but lucky in the choice of a lover.

Min. As much as to say, madam, that there is—

Oliv. Why, yes, as much as to say—I see you are resolved to have my secret, Minette, and so—

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. There is a gentleman at the door, madam, called Don Julio de Melessina.—He waits on you from Don Vincentio.

Oliv. Who? Don Julio! it cannot be—art thou sure of his name?

Serv. The servant repeated it twice.—He is in a fine carriage, and seems to be a nobleman.

Oliv. Conduct him hither. [*Exit* SERVANT.] I am astonished! I cannot see him! I would not have him know the incognita to be Olivia for worlds!—There is but one way. [*Aside.*] Minette, ask no questions; but do as I order you.—Receive Don Julio in my name; call yourself the heiress of Don Cæsar and on no account suffer him to believe that you are any thing else. [*Exit.*

Min. So, then, this is some new lover she is determined to disgust; and fancies that making me pass for her, will complete it. Perhaps her ladyship may be mistaken, though.—[*Looking through the wing.*]—Upon my word, a sweet man! Oh, lud! my heart beats with the very idea of his making love to me, even though he takes me for another! stay! I think he sha'n't find me here—Standing in the middle of a room gives one's appearance no effect.—I'll

enter upon him with an easy swim, or an engaging trip, or a—something that shall strike—the first glance is every thing. [*Exit.*

Enter DON JULIO, *preceded by a* SERVANT, *who retires.*

Julio. Not here! The ridiculous dispute between Garcia and Vincentio gives me irresistible curiosity; though, if she is the character Garcia describes, I expect to be cuffed for my impertinence.—Here she comes!—A pretty, little, smiling girl, 'faith, for a vixen!

Enter MINETTE, *very affectedly.*

Min. Sir, your most obedient humble servant—You are Don Julio de Melessina? I am extremely glad to see you, sir.

Julio. [*Aside.*] A very courteous reception:—You honour me infinitely, madam. I must apologize for waiting on you without a better introduction.—Don Vincentio promised to attend me; but a concert called him to another part of the town, at the moment I prepared to come hither.

Min. A concert!—Yes, sir, he is very fond of music.

Julio. He is, madam:—You, I suppose, have a passion for that charming science?

Min. Oh, yes, I love it mightily.

Julio. [*Aside.*] This is lucky! I think I have heard, Donna Olivia, that your taste that way is peculiar; you are fond of a——'faith, I can hardly speak it, [*Aside.*]—of a——Jew's harp. [*Smothering a laugh.*

Min. A Jew's harp! Mercy! What, do you think a person of my birth and figure can have such fancies as that?——No, sir, I love fiddles, French horns, tabors, and all the cheerful, noisy instruments in the world.

Julio. [*Aside.*] Vincentio must have been mad; and I as mad as him to mention it. Then you are fond of concerts, madam?

Min. Dote on them! I wish he'd offer me a ticket. [*Aside.*

Julio. [*Aside.*] Vincentio is clearly wrong.—Now, to prove how far the other was right in supposing her a vixen.

Min. There is a grand public concert, sir, to be to-morrow. Pray do you go?

Julio. I believe I shall have that pleasure, madam.

Min. My father, Don Cæsar, won't let me purchase a ticket: I think it's very hard.

Julio. Pardon me—I think it's perfectly right.

Min. Right! what, to refuse me a trifling expense, that would procure me a great pleasure?

Julio. Yes, doubtless—the ladies are too fond of pleasure: I think Don Cæsar is exemplary.

Min. Lord, sir! you'd think it very hard, if you were me, to be locked up all your life, and know nothing of the world but what you could catch through the bars of your balcony.

Julio. Perhaps I might; but, as a man, I am convinced 'tis right. Daughters and wives should be equally excluded those destructive haunts of dissipation.—Let them keep to their embroidery, nor ever presume to show their faces but at their own firesides.——This will bring out the Xantippe, surely! [*Aside.*

Min. Well, sir, I don't know—to be sure, home, as you say, is the fittest place for women. For my part I could live for ever at home. I am determined he shall have his way; who knows what may happen? [*Aside.*

Julio. [*Aside.*] By all the powers of caprice, Garcia is as wrong as the other!

Min. I delight in nothing so much as in sitting by my father, and hearing his tales of old times; and I

fancy, when I have a husband, I shall be more happy to sit and listen to his stories of present times.

Julio. Perhaps, your husband, fair lady, might not be inclined so to amuse you. Men have a thousand delights that call them abroad; and probably your chief amusements would be counting the hours of his absence, and giving a tear to each as it passed.

Min. Well, he should never see them, however. I would always smile when he entered; and if he found my eyes red, I'd say, I had been weeping over the history of the unfortunate damsel, whose true love hung himself at sea, and appeared to her afterwards in a wet jacket.—Sure, this will do! [*Aside.*

Julio. I am every moment more astonished! Pray, madam, permit me a question.—Are you, really—yet I cannot doubt it—are you, really, Donna Olivia, the daughter of Don Cæsar, to whom Don Garcia and Don Vincentio had lately the honour of paying their addresses?

Min. Am I Donna Olivia! ha! ha! ha! what a question! Pray, sir, is this my father's house?—Are you Don Julio?

Julio. I beg your pardon; but, to confess, I had heard you described as a lady who had not quite so much sweetness, and——

Min. Oh! what, you had heard that I was a termagant, I suppose.—'Tis all slander, sir: there is not in Madrid, though I say it, a sweeter temper than my own; and though I have refused a good many lovers, yet, if one was to offer himself that I could like—

Julio. You would take pity, and reward his passion?

Min. I would.

Julio. Lovely Donna Olivia, how charming is this frankness!—'Tis a little odd, though! *Aside.*

Min. Why, I believe I should take pity; for it always seemed to me to be very hard-hearted, to be

cruel to a lover that one likes, because, in that case, one should—a—you know, sir, the sooner the affair is over, the better for both parties.

Julio. What the deuce does she mean?—Is this Garcia's sour fruit?

Cæsar. [*Without.*] Olivia! Olivia!

Min. Bless me, I hear my father! Now, sir, I have a particular fancy that you should not tell him, in this first visit, your design.

Julio. Madam! my design!

Min. Yes, that you will not speak out, till we have had a little further conversation, which I'll take care to give you an opportunity for very soon.—He'll be here in a moment: now, pray, Don Julio, go. If he should meet you, and ask who you are, you can say, that you are—you may say, that you came on a visit to my maid, you know. [*Exit.*

Julio. I thank you, madam, [*Aloud.*] for my dismission. [*Aside.*] I never was in such a peril in my life. I believe she has a license in her pocket, a priest in her closet, and the ceremony by heart.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

DON CARLOS'S.

DON CARLOS *discovered writing.*

Car. [*Tearing paper, and rising.*] It is in vain!—Language cannot furnish me with terms to soften to Victoria the horrid transaction. Could she see the compunctions of my soul, her gentle heart would pity me. But what then?—She's ruined! my children are undone! Oh! the artifices of one base woman, and my villany to another most amiable one, has made me unfit to live. I am a wretch, who ought to be blotted from society.

Enter PEDRO, *hastily.*

Ped. Sir—sir!

Car. Well!

Ped. Sir, I have just met Don Florio; he asked if my mistress was at home; so I guesses he is going to our house, and so I run to let you know—for I loves to keep my promises, though I am deadly afraid of some mischief.

Car. You have done well.—Go home, and wait for me at the door, and admit me without noise. [*Exit* PEDRO.] At least, then, I shall have the pleasure of revenge; I'll punish that harlot, by sacrificing her paramour in her arms; and then—Oh! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

DONNA LAURA'S.

Enter LAURA, *with precipitation, followed by* VICTORIA.

Laura. 'Tis his carriage!—How successful was my letter! This, my Florio, is a most important moment.

Vict. It is, indeed; and I will leave you to make every advantage of it. If I am present, I must witness condescensions from you that I shall not be able to bear, though I know them to be but affected.—Now, Gasper, [*Aside.*] play thy part well, and save Victoria! [*Exit.*

Enter GASPER, *dressed as an old Beau; two* SERVANTS *follow him, and take off a rich cloak.*

Gasp. Take my cloak; and, d'ye hear? Ricardo, go home and bring the eider-down cushions for the coach, and tell the fellow not to hurry me post through the streets of Madrid. [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.] I have been jolted from side to side, like a pippin in a mill stream. Drive a man of my rank, as he would a city vintner and his fat wife, going to a bull-fight! Ha, there she is! [*Looking through a glass suspended by a red riband.*]—there she is! Charming Donna Laura! let me thus at the shrine of your beauty—[*Makes an effort to kneel, and falls on his face;* LAURA *assists him to rise.*] Fie, fie, those new shoes!—they have made me skate all day, like a Dutchman on a canal; and now—Well, you see how

profound my adoration is, madam. Common lovers kneel; I was prostrate.

Laura. You do me infinite honour.——Disgustful wretch!—You are thinner than you were, Don Sancho: I protest, now I observe you, you are much altered!

Gasp. Ay, madam—fretting. Your absence threw me into a fever, and that destroyed my bloom:—You see, I look almost a middle-aged man, now.

Laura. No, really; far from it, I assure you.——The fop is as wrinkled as a baboon! [*Aside.*

Gasp. Then jealousy—that gave me a jaundice.—My niece's husband, I hear, Don Carlos, has been my happy rival. Oh, my blade will hardly keep in its scabbard, when I think of him.

Laura. Think no more of him—he has been long banished my thoughts, be assured. I wonder you gave your niece to him with such a fortune.

Gasp. Gave! she gave herself; and, as to fortune, she had not a pistole from me.

Laura. 'Twas, indeed, unnecessary, with so fine an estate as she had in Leon.

Gasp. My niece an estate in Leon! Not enough to give shelter to a field-mouse; and if he has told you so, he is a braggart.

Laura. Told me so!—I have the writings: he has made over the lands to me.

Gasp. Made over the lands to you!—Oh, a deceiver! I begin to suspect a plot. Pray let me see this extraordinary deed. [*She runs to a cabinet.*] A plot, I'll be sworn!

Laura. Here is the deed which made that estate mine for ever. No, sir, I will intrust it in no hand but my own. Yet look over me, and read the description of the lands.

Gasp. [*Reading through his glass.*] H—m—m: *In the vicinage of Rosalvo, bounded on the west by the river——h—m—m, on the east by the forest——Oh,*

an artful dog! I need read no further; I see how the thing is.

Laura. How, sir!—but hold!——Stay a moment —I am breathless with fear.

Gasp. Nay, madam, don't be afraid! 'Tis my estate—that's all; the very castle where I was born; and which I never did, nor ever will, bestow on any Don in the two Castiles. Dissembling rogue! Bribe you with a fictitious title to my estate—ha! ha! ha!

Laura. [*Aside.*] Curses follow him! The villain I employed must have been his creature; his reluctance all art; and whilst I believed myself undoing him, was duped myself!

Gasp. Could you suppose I'd give Carlos such an estate for running away with my niece? No, no!—the vineyards, and the corn fields, and the woods of Rosalva, are not for him.—I've somebody else in my eye—in my eye observe me—to give those to:—Can't you guess who it is?

Laura. No, indeed!—He gives me a glimmering that saves me from despair! [*Aside.*

Gasp. I won't tell you, unless you'll bribe me—I won't indeed. [*Kisses her cheek.*] There, now I'll tell you—they are all for you. Yes, this estate, to which you have taken such a fancy, shall be yours.—I'll give you the deeds if you'll promise to love me, you little cruel thing!

Laura. Can you be serious?

Gasp. I'll sign and seal to-morrow.

Laura. Noble Don Sancho! Thus then I annihilate the proof of his perfidy and my weakness.—Thus, I tear to atoms his detested name; and as I tread on these, so would I on his heart.

Enter VICTORIA.

Vict. My children then are saved! [*In transport.*

Laura. [*Apart.*] Oh, Florio, 'tis as thou saidst—

Carlos was a villain, and deceived me. Why this strange air! Ah, I see the cause—you think me ruined, and will abandon me. Yes, I see it in thy averted face; thou darest not meet my eyes. If I misjudge thee, speak!

Vict. Laura, I cannot speak.—You little guess the emotions of my heart.—Heaven knows I pity you!

Laura. Pity! Oh, villain! and has thy love already snatched the form of pity? Base, deceitful——

Car. [*Without.*] Stand off, loose your weak hold; I'm come for vengeance!

Enter CARLOS.

Where is this youth? Where is the blooming rival, for whom I have been betrayed? Hold me not, base woman! In vain the stripling flies me; for, by heaven, my sword shall in his bosom write its master's wrongs!

[VICTORIA *first goes towards the Flat, then returns, takes off her Hat, and drops on one Knee.*

Vict. Strike, strike it here! Plunge it deep into that bosom, already wounded by a thousand stabs, keener and more painful than your sword can give, —Here lives all the gnawing anguish of love betrayed; here live the pangs of disappointed hopes, hopes sanctified by holiest vows, which have been written in the book of heaven.——Hah! he sinks. —[*She flies to him.*]—Oh! my Carlos! my beloved! my husband! forgive my too severe reproaches; thou art dear, yet dear as ever, to Victoria's heart!

Car. [*Recovering.*] Oh, you know not what you do—you know not what you are. Oh, Victoria, thou art a beggar!

Vict. No, we are rich, we are happy! See there, the fragments of that fatal deed, which, had I not

recovered, we had been indeed undone; yet still not wretched, could my Carlos think so!

Car. The fragments of the deed! the deed which that base woman——

Vict. Speak not so harshly.——To you, madam, I fear, I seem reprehensible; yet, when you consider my duties as a wife and mother, you will forgive me, —Be not afraid of poverty—a woman has deceived, but she will not desert you!

Laura. Is this real? Can I be awake?

Vict. Oh, may'st thou indeed awake to virtue!—You have talents that might grace the highest of our sex; be no longer unjust to such precious gifts, by burying them in dishonour.—Virtue is our first, most awful duty; bow, Laura! bow before her throne, and mourn in ceaseless tears, that ever you forgot her heavenly precepts!

Laura. So, by a smooth speech about virtue, you think to cover the injuries I sustain. Vile, insinuating monster!—but thou know'st me not.—Revenge is sweeter to my heart than love; and if there is a law in Spain to gratify that passion, your virtue shall have another field for exercise. [*Exit.*

Car. [*Turning towards* VICTORIA.] My hated rival and my charming wife! How many sweet mysteries have you to unfold?——Oh, Victoria! my soul thanks thee, but I dare not yet say I love thee, till ten thousand acts of watchful tenderness have proved how deep the sentiment's engraved.

Vict. Can it be true that I have been unhappy?—But the mysteries, my Carlos, are already explained to you—Gasper's resemblance to my uncle——

Gasp. Yes, sir, I was always apt at resemblances—In our plays at home, I am always Queen Cleopatra —You know she was but a gipsy queen, and I hits her off to a nicety.

Car. Come, my Victoria—Oh, there is a painful pleasure in my bosom—To gaze on thee, to listen

to, and to love thee, seems like the bliss of angels' cheering whispers to repentant sinners.

[*Exeunt* CARLOS *and* VICTORIA.

Gasp. Lord help 'em! how easily the women are taken in! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Prado.

Enter MINETTE.

Min. Ah, here comes the man at last, after I have been sauntering in sight of his lodgings these two hours.—Now, if my scheme takes, what a happy person shall I be! and sure, as I was Donna Olivia today, to please my lady, I may be Donna Olivia tonight, to please myself. I'll address him as the maid of a lady who has taken a fancy to him, then convey him to our house—then retire, and then come in again, and, with a vast deal of confusion, confess I sent my maid for him. If he should dislike my forwardness, the censure will fall on my lady; if he should be pleased with my person, the advantage will be mine. But perhaps he's come here on some wicked frolic or other.—I'll watch him at a distance before I speak. [*Exit.*

Enter DON JULIO.

Julio. Not here, 'faith; though she gave me last night but a faint refusal, and I had a right, by all the rules of gallantry, to construe that into an assent.—Then she's a jilt—Hang her, I feel I am uneasy—The first woman that ever gave me pain.—I am ashamed to perceive that this spot has attractions

for me, only because it was here I conversed with her. 'Twas here the little Syren, conscious of her charms, unveiled her fascinating face—'Twas here —Ha!

Enter DON GARCIA *and* DON VINCENTIO.

Gar. Ha! Don Julio!

Julio. Pshaw! gentlemen, pray be quick.

Gar. 'Twas here that Julio, leaving champaigne untasted, and songs of gallantry unsung, came to talk to the whistling branches.

Vin. 'Twas here that Julio, flying from the young and gay, was found in doleful meditation—[*Altering his tone.*]—on a wench, for a hundred ducats!

Gar. Who is she?

Julio. Not Donna Olivia, gentlemen; not Donna Olivia.

Gar. We have been seeking you, to ask the event of your visit to her.

Julio. The event has proved that you have been most grossly duped.

Vin. I knew that—Ha! ha! ha!

Julio. And you likewise, I know that—Ha! ha! ha!——The fair lady, so far from being a vixen, is the very essence of gentleness. To me, so much sweetness in a wife would be downright maukish.

Vin. Well, but she's fond of a Jew's harp.

Julio. Detests it; she would be as fond of a Jew.

Gar. Pho, pho! this is a game at cross purposes; —let us all go to Don Cæsar's together, and compare opinions on the spot.

Julio. I'll go most willingly—but it will be only to cover you both with confusion, for being the two men in Spain most easily imposed on. [*All going.*

Enter MINETTE.

Min. Gentlemen, my lady has sent me for one of you, pray which of you is it?

Julio. [*Returning.*] Me, without doubt, child.

Vin. I don't know that.

Gar. Look at me, my dear; don't you think I am the man?

Min. Let me see—a good air, and well made—you are the man for a dancer. [*To* GARCIA.]—Well dressed, and nicely put out of hands—you are the man for a bandbox. [*To* VINCENTIO.]—Handsome and bold—you are the man for my lady.

[*To* JULIO.

Julio. My dear little Iris, here's all the gold in my pocket.—Gentlemen, I wish you a good night—I am your very obedient, humble—

[*Stalking by them, with his arm round* MINETTE.

Gar. Pho! pr'ythee, don't be a fool. Are we not going to Donna Olivia?

Julio. Donna Olivia must wait my dear boy; we can decide about her to-morrow. Come along, my little dove of Venus! [*Exit.*

Gar. What a rash fellow it is! ten to one but this is some common business, and he'll be robbed and murdered—they take him for a stranger.

Vin. Let's follow, and see where she leads him.

Gar. That's hardly fair: however, as I think there's danger, we will follow. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

DON CÆSAR'S.

Enter MINETTE *and* DON JULIO.

Min. There, sir, please to sit down till my lady is ready to wait on you—she won't be long—I'm sure

she's out, and I may do great things before she returns. [*Aside.—Exit.*

Julio. Through fifty back lanes, a long garden, and a narrow staircase, into a superb apartment—all that's in the regular way; as the Spanish women manage it, one intrigue is too much like another. If it was not now and then for the little lively fillip of a jealous husband or brother, which obliges one to leap from a window, or crawl, like a cat, along the gutters, there would be no bearing the *ennui.* Ah! ah! but this promises novelty; [*Looking through the wing.*] a young girl and an old man—wife or daughter? They are coming this way. My lovely incognita, by all that's propitious! Why did not some kind spirit whisper to me my happiness? but hold—she can't mean to treat the old gentleman with a sight of me. [*Goes behind the sofa.*

Enter Don Cæsar *and* Olivia.

Cæsar. No, no, madam, no going out—There, madam, this is your apartment, your house, your garden, your assembly, till you go to your convent. Why, how impudent you are, to look thus unconcerned!—Can hardly forbear laughing in my face! —Very well—very well! [*Exit, double locking the door.*

Oliv. Ha! ha! ha! I'll be even with you, my dear father, if you treble lock it. I'll stay here two days, without once asking for my liberty, and you'll come the third, with tears in your eyes, to take me out.—He has forgot the door leading to the garden—but I vow I'll stay, [*Sitting down.*] I can make the time pass pleasantly enough.

Julio. I hope so. [*Looking over the back of the sofa.*

Oliv. Heaven and earth!

Julio. My dear creature, why are you so alarmed? am I here before you expected me? [Coming round.

Oliv. Expected you!

Julio. Oh, this pretty surprise! Come, let us sit down; I think your father was very obliging to lock us in together.

Oliv. Sir! sir! my father! [*Calling at the door.*

Cæsar. [*Without.*] Ay, 'tis all in vain.—I won't come near you. There you are, and there you may stay.—I sha'n't return, make as much noise as you will.

Julio. Why, are you not ashamed that your father has so much more consideration for your guest than you have?

Oliv. My guest! how is it possible he can have discovered me? [*Aside.*

Julio. Pho! This is carrying the thing further than you need—if there was a third person here, it might be prudent.

Oliv. Why, this assurance, Don Julio, is really—

Julio. The thing in the world you are most ready to pardon.

Oliv. Upon my word, I don't know how to treat you.

Julio. Consult your heart!

Oliv. I shall consult my honour.

Julio. Honour is a pretty thing to play with, but when spoken with that very grave face, after having sent your maid to bring me here, is really more than I expected. I shall be in an ill humour presently—I won't stay if you treat me thus.

Oliv. Well, this is superior to every thing! I have heard that men will slander women privately to each other; 'tis their common amusement; but to do it to one's face!—and you really pretend that I sent for you?

Julio. Ha! ha! ha! Well, if it obliges you, I will pretend that you did not send for me; that your maid did not conduct me hither; nay, that I have not now the supreme happiness—[Catching her in his arms.]

Enter MINETTE; *she screams, and runs out.*

Julio. Donna Olivia de Zuniga! how the devil came she here?

Olivi. [*Aside.*] That's lucky, Olivia, my dear friend, why do you run away? Keep the character, I charge you. [*Apart to* MINETTE.] Be still Olivia.

Min. Oh! dear madam! I was—I was so frightened when I saw that gentleman.

Oliv. Oh, my dear, it's the merriest pretty kind of gentleman in the world; he pretends that I sent my maid for him into the streets, ha! ha!

Julio. That's right; always tell a thing yourself, which you would not have believed.

Min. It is the readiest excuse for being found in a lady's apartment, however. Now will I swear I know nothing of the matter. [*Aside.*

Oliv. Now, I think it a horrid poor excuse; he has certainly not had occasion to invent reasons for such impertinencies often. Tell me that he has made love to you to-day. [*Apart.*

Min. I fancy that he has had occasion to excuse impertinencies often;——his impertinence to me to-day——

Julio. To you, madam?

Min. Making love to me, my dear, all the morning—could hardly get him away, he was so desirous to speak to my father. Nay, sir, I don't care for your impatience.

Julio. [*Aside.*] Now would I give a thousand pistoles if she were a man!

Oliv. Nay, then, this accidental meeting is fortunate—pray, Don Julio, don't let my presence prevent your saying what you think proper to my friend—shall I leave you together?

Julio. [*Apart.*] To contradict a lady on such an assertion would be too gross; but, upon my honour, Donna Olivia is the last woman upon earth who

could inspire me with a tender idea. Find an excuse to send her away, my angel, I entreat you. I have a thousand things to say, and the moments are too precious to be given to her.

Oliv. I think so too, but one can't be rude, you know. Come, my dear, sit down, [*Seating herself.*] have you brought your work?

Julio. The devil! what can she mean? [*Pushing himself between* MINETTE *and the sofa.*] Donna Olivia, I am sorry to inform you that my physician has just been sent for to your father, Don Cæsar.—The poor gentleman was seized with a vertigo.

Oliv. Vertigoes! Oh, he has them frequently, you know. [*To* MINETTE.

Min. Yes, and they always keep me from his sight.

Julio. Did ever one woman prevent another from leaving her at such a moment before? I really, madam, cannot comprehend——

Cæsar. [*Without.*] It is impossible—impossible, gentlemen! Don Julio cannot be here.

Julio. Hah! who's that?

Enter DON CÆSAR, DON GARCIA, *and* DON VINCENTIO.

Gar. There! did we not tell you so? we saw him enter the garden.

Cæsar. What can be the meaning of all this? A man in my daughter's apartment! [*Attempting to draw.*

Gar. Hold, sir! Don Julio is of the first rank in Spain, and will unquestionably be able to satisfy your honour, without troubling your sword.—We have done mischief, Vincentio! [*Apart.*

Julio. [*To* OLIVIA.] They have been cursedly impertinent! but I'll bring you off, never fear, by pretending a passion for your busy friend, there.

Cæsar. Satisfy me then in a moment, speak, one of you.

Julio. I came here, sir, by the merest accident.—The garden door was open, curiosity led me to this apartment.—You came in a moment after, and very civilly locked me in with your daughter.

Cæsar. Locked you in! why, then, did you not, like a man of honour, cry out?

Julio. The lady cried out, sir, and you told her you would not return; but when Donna Olivia de Zuniga entered, for whom I have conceived a most violent passion——

Cæsar. A passion for her! Oh, let me hear no more on't.—A passion for her! You may as well entertain a passion for the untameable hyæna.

Gar. There, Vincentio, what think you now? Xantippe or not?

Vin. I am afraid I must give up that—but, pray, support me as to this point, Don Cæsar; is not the lady fond of a Jew's harp!

Cæsar. Fond! she's fond of nothing, but playing the vixen; there is not such a fury upon earth!

Julio. These are odd liberties, with a person who does not belong to him.

Cæsar. I'll play the hypocrite for her no more; the world shall know her true character, they shall know——but ask her maid there.

Julio. Her maid!

Min. Why, yes, sir; to say the truth, I am but Donna Olivia's maid after all.

Oliv. [*Apart.*] Dear Minette! speak for me, or I am now ruined.

Min. I will, ma'am.—I must confess, sir, [*Going up to* JULIO.] there never was so bitter a tempered creature, as my lady is. I have borne her humours for two years; I have seen her by night and by day. [OLIVIA *pulls her sleeve, impatiently.*] I will, I will! [*To* OLIVIA.] and this I am sure, that if you marry her, you'll rue the day every hour the first

month, and hang yourself the next. There, madam, I have done it roundly now

Oliv. I am undone—I am caught in my own snare! [*Aside.*

Cæsar. After this true character of my daughter, I suppose, signor, we shall hear no more of your passion; so let us go down, and leave madam to begin her penance.

Julio. My ideas are totally confused.—You Donna Olivia de Zuniga, and the person I thought you, her maid! something too flattering darts across my mind.

Cæsar. If you have taken a fancy to her maid, I have nothing farther to say; but as to that violent creature——

Julio. Oh, do not profane her.—Where is that spirit which you tell me of? Is it that which speaks in modest, conscious blushes on her cheeks? Is it that which bends her lovely eyes to earth?

Cæsar. Ay, she's only bending them to earth, considering how to afflict me with some new obstinacy—she'll break out like a tigress in a moment.

Julio. It cannot be—are you, charming woman! such a creature?

Oliv. Yes, to all mankind—but one.

[*Looking down.*

Julio. But one! Oh, might that excepted one be me:

Oliv. Would you not fear to trust your fate with her you have cause to think so hateful?

Julio. No, I'd bless the hour that bound my fate to her's—permit me, sir, to pay my vows to this fair vixen.

Cæsar. What, are you such a bold man as that?—Pho! but if you are, 'twill be only lost time—she'll contrive, some way or other, to return your vows upon your hands.

Oliv. If they have your authority, sir, I will return them—only with my own.

Cæsar. What's that? what did she say? my head is giddy with surprise.

Julio. And mine with rapture. [*Catching her hand.*

Cæsar. Don't make a fool of me, Olivia. Wilt marry him?

Oliv. When you command me, sir.

Cæsar. My dear Don Julio, thou art my guardian angel—shall I have a son-in-law at last? Garcia, Vincentio, could you have thought it?

Gar. No, sir; if we had, we should have saved that lady much trouble; 'tis pretty clear, now, why she was a vixen.

Vin. Yes, yes, 'tis clear enough, and I beg your pardon, madam, for the share of trouble I gave you; but, pray, have the goodness to tell me, sincerely, what do you think of a crash?

Oliv. I love music, Don Vincentio, I admire your skill, and whenever you'll give me a concert, I shall be obliged.

Vin. You could not have pleased me so well, if you had married me.

Enter Don Carlos *and* Victoria.

Oliv. Hah! here comes Victoria and her Carlos. My friend, you are happy—'tis in your eyes; I need not ask the event.

Cæsar. What! is this Don Carlos, whom Victoria gave us for a cousin? Sir, you come in a happy hour!

Car. I do indeed, for I am most happy.

Julio. My dear Carlos, what has new made thee thus, this morning?

Car. A wife! Marry, Julio, marry!

Julio. What! this advice from you?

Car. Yes; and when you have married an angel, when that angel has done for you such things as makes your gratitude almost equal to your love, you may then guess something of what I feel, in calling *this* angel mine.

Oliv. Now, I trust, Don Julio, after all this, that if I should do you the honour of my hand, you'll treat me cruelly, be a very bad man, that I, like my exemplary cousin——

Vict. Hold, Olivia! it is not necessary that a husband should be faulty to make a wife's character exemplary.—Should he be tenderly watchful of your happiness, your gratitude will give a thousand graces to your conduct; whilst the purity of your manners, and the nice honour of your life, will gain you the approbation of those whose praise is fame.

Oliv. Pretty and matronly! thank you, my dear. We have each struck a bold stroke to-day;—yours has been to reclaim a husband, mine to get one; but the most important is yet to be obtained—the approbation of our judges.

That meed withheld, our labours have been vain,
Pointless my jests, and doubly keen your pain;
Might we their plaudits, and their praise provoke,
Our *bold* should then be term'd a *happy* stroke.

[*Exeunt.*

THE END.

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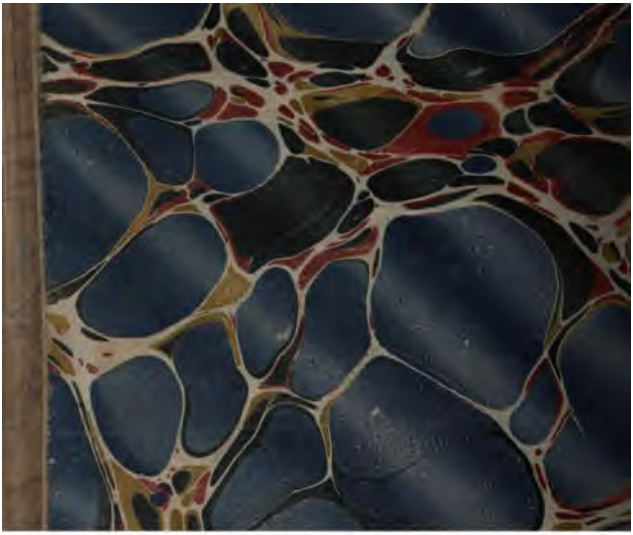

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